THE NEW TESTAMENT EPISTLES

HEBREWS, JAMES, FIRST PETER, SECOND PETER, JUDE

D. A. HAYES

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Biblical Introduction Series

The New Testament Epistles

Hebrews, James, First Peter, Second Peter, Jude

By

D. A. HAYES

Professor of New Testament Interpretation in the Graduate School of Theology
Garrett Biblical Institute

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TO

FREDERICK CARL EISELEN

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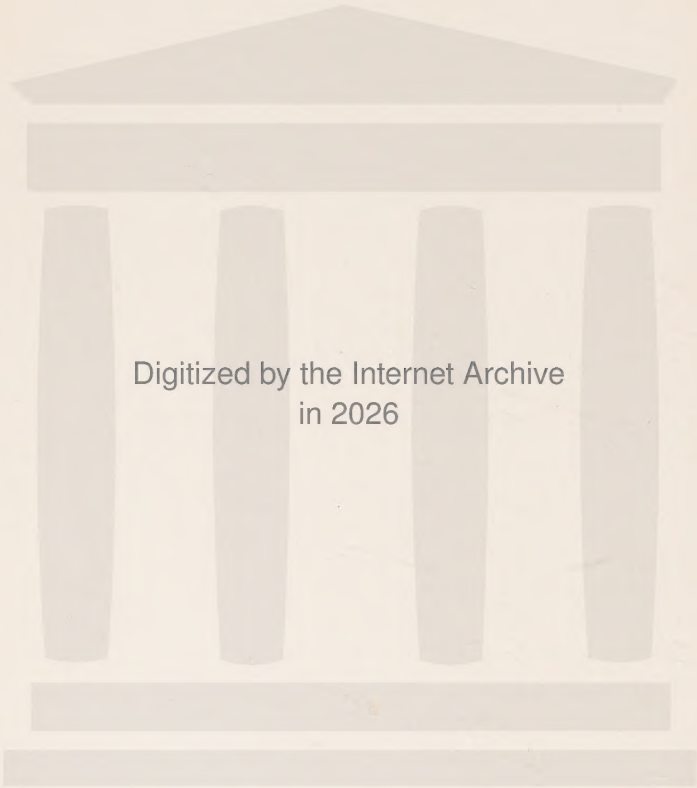
MY COLLABORATOR IN THIS SERIES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CONTENTS

PAGE

FOREWORD 11

PART I. THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

I. AN ESTIMATE OF THE EPISTLE 17
1. The Only Anonymous Epistle 18
2. First Rank in Literature 19
3. Most Important Single Epistle 21
4. Interesting in Content 22
5. Dividing the Church 24

II. THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE EPISTLE IN THE EAST 24

III. THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE EPISTLE IN THE WEST 28

IV. OPINIONS OF MODERN SCHOLARS 30

V. ARGUMENTS AGAINST PAULINE AUTHORSHIP 31
1. The Difference of Style 31
2. The Difference of Language 35
3. Difference in Method of Argument 38
4. Different Beginning and Ending 38
5. The Use of a Different Bible Text 39
6. Difference in Quotation 40
7. Alexandrian Influence 41
8. Ignorance of Temple Ritual 48
9. Second Generation of Believers 49

VI. RELATION TO PAUL AND THE PAULINE THEOLOGY 51

VII. WHO IS THE AUTHOR? 55

VIII. TO WHOM WAS THE EPISTLE WRITTEN? 67

IX. PLACE OF WRITING? 73

X. TIME OF WRITING 73

XI. PURPOSE OF WRITING 76

XII. AUTHORITIES FOR THE TEXT OF THE EPISTLE 77

XIII. OUTLINE OF THE EPISTLE 77

PART II. THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

I. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EPISTLE 81
1. Jewish 81
2. Authoritative 87
3. Practical 88

PAGE

II. Author of the Epistle 90

III. Style of the Epistle 93
1. Its Plainness 93
2. Its Good Greek 95
3. Its Vividness 97
4. Its Duadiplosis 99
5. Its Poetic Conceptions 99
6. Its Unlikeness to Paul 101
7. Its Likeness to Jesus 101

IV. Date of the Epistle 105

V. History of the Epistle 107

VI. The Message of the Epistle to Our Times 114
1. To the Pietists 114
2. To the Sociologists 115
3. To the Students of the Life and Character of Jesus .. 115

PART III. THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

I. The Apostle Peter 121
1. A Likable Man 121
2. A Hasty Man 121
3. A Going Man 131
4. A Loyal Man 135
5. A Rock Man 138
6. A Growing Man 141
7. The Apostle of Hope 143
8. A Pen Portrait of Peter 143

II. Peter's Personality in the Epistle 145

III. Dependence Upon the Pauline Epistles 161

IV. Date of the Epistle 164

V. Place of Writing 164

VI. Style of the Epistle 167

VII. One Peculiar Doctrine 176

VIII. Genuineness of the Epistle 182

PART IV. THE "SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER"

I. Uncertainty as to Authenticity 187

II. Differences between First Peter and "Second Peter" 193

III. Dependence upon the Epistle of Jude 199

IV. Dependence upon Josephus 202

V. Dependence upon Philo 206

PAGE

VI. Dependence upon Clement of Rome 206
VII. Dependence upon the Apocalypse of Peter 207
VIII. Other Indications of Late Origin 210
IX. Peculiarities of Doctrine 215
X. Conclusions of Various Scholars 217
XI. Place of Writing, Date, and Destination 220

PART V. THE EPISTLE OF JUDE

I. Peculiarities 225
1. Triple Arrangement 225
2. Peculiar Expressions 227
3. Apocryphal Quotations 228
II. The Apocryphal Authorities 229
1. The Book of Enoch 229
2. The Assumption of Moses 231
III. General Characteristics 233
1. Poetic Feeling 233
2. Literary Merit 233
3. Sternness of Tone 234
IV. The Author 235
V. Authenticity 238
VI. Purpose of Writing 240

A Closing Word 241
Bibliography 247
Indexes 255

FOREWORD

THIS volume concludes our studies in the special introduction to the New Testament books. The first in the series, Paul and His Epistles, found that the personality of the apostle was apparent in all of the thirteen epistles ascribed to him. The second book, John and His Writings, came to the conclusion that the personal characteristics of the Boanerges and beloved disciple could be traced in all of the five books which bear his name. The third volume, The Synoptic Gospels and the Book of Acts, combined a study of the personalities of their authors with the study of the characteristics of the books themselves. In this fourth and concluding volume the method of the preceding books has been continued in the study of James, First Peter, and Jude; but it fails us in The Epistle to the Hebrews and the so-called "Second Epistle of Peter," since the one is of anonymous and the other of pseudonymous authorship.

The epistles discussed in this volume are not upon the same sure basis of canonicity represented by most of the other books of the New Testament. The oldest canonical list we have, that of the Muratorian Fragment, omits Hebrews, James, First Peter, and "Second Peter." The Bible of the Western Church, the Itala, which was the second century translation of the New Testament books into the Latin, did not contain Hebrews, James, and "Second Peter." The Bible of the Eastern Church, the Peshito, which was the second century translation of the New Testament books into the Syriac, omitted "Second Peter," Second and Third John, Jude, and Revelation. Origen in the third century classed "Second Peter," Second and Third John, James, and Jude among the "doubtful" books. Eusebius

in the fourth century still placed James, "Second Peter," Second and Third John, Jude, and Revelation among the "Anti-legomena," the books regarded as of somewhat doubtful authenticity by many.

If we put the books contained in the Itala and the Peshito together we have all the books of our New Testament, except "Second Peter." These Bibles of the East and the West contained the First Epistle of Peter, but the other books discussed in this volume were omitted in either the one or the other. That meant that these books were somewhat slower than the other New Testament books in gaining canonical recognition in the general church. If the suggestion made by Carlstadt at the time of the Reformation had been adopted by the Protestant church and the books of the New Testament had been divided into three classes according to their degree of canonical authority, First Peter would have fallen into the second class and Hebrews, James, "Second Peter," and Jude would have been assigned to the third class as among the books to be admitted last into the canon. It is into this more doubtful field that we enter in this book.

We have attempted in this series to be thorough-going in our research and independent in our conclusions. We have tried to face all the facts and to be influenced only by these. We have tried to submit the facts in each case, believing that it was the right of the church, both preachers and laymen, to know them. We have felt that it was one duty of the theologian to transmit to the rank and file of the church membership the results of the best and most recent theological discussion and to put these into the most readable and interesting form which seemed to be possible. The reception granted to the preceding volumes of this series would seem to indicate that we have succeeded in our endeavor in this direction in some measure at least.

These four volumes are simply volumes in Introduction. Their only office has been to introduce their readers to the

New Testament books. They have led up to the threshold of these treasure houses and have given merely a glimpse of the invaluable contents of each. They will have failed in their most serious intent if those who read them are not led to enter and explore for themselves these palaces of revealed truth and to become acquainted with and possessed of the incalculable riches they offer to all who diligently search for them.

There is a degree of satisfaction in having completed a work upon which one has been engaged for years. We finish this series with the sincere prayer that its four volumes may help to the study and love of the New Testament books and thus to the progress and the fulfillment of the faith and life they present.

PART I

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

I. An Estimate of the Epistle

The Epistle to the Hebrews is one of the most important and one of the most interesting books ever written. It is full of strange and startling statements and it has had a strange and extraordinary history. It is unique in conception, unparalleled in content, and preeminent in composition. It stands in our New Testament in a class by itself, like a noble but solitary figure in the midst of the throng.

The Pauline Epistles have a stamp of their own. The Catholic Epistles form a group by themselves. The Epistle to the Hebrews does not belong to either of these companies. It is not like the histories, and it is not like the Apocalypse. As Franz Delitzsch and Philip Schaff have pointed out,[1] it resembles the Melchizedek of which its central portion treats. It combines priestly unction and royal dignity. It is without father, without mother, and without pedigree. It is mysterious in its origin and in its destination. We do not know whence it came nor whither it went in the beginning. We do not know when or where it was written. For us it has no definite beginning of days, and we are sure that it will have no end of life. The obscurity which surrounds the circumstances of its birth only makes the inherent worth of its content seem the more illustrious. Like any other work of genius, it shines by its own and not by any reflected light. The more it is studied the more it is appreciated, and it makes its appeal to many classes.

We suggest the following noteworthy facts in connection with this epistle.

[1] Compare Delitzsch, Commentary, vol. i, p. 4, and Schaff, Apostolic Christianity, p. 810.

1. It is the only anonymous epistle in the New Testament. There are those who think that "Second Peter" is a pseudonymous epistle, and others have tried to prove that some of the Pauline Epistles belonged to this class. They think that the names of the great apostles were attached to these epistles to give them authority. The Epistle to the Hebrews seems to feel the need of no such authentication. The name of its author is neither prefixed nor affixed. It asks no hearing because of reverence for him.

It begins with the whole gist of the matter it has to present in its first sentence, and that first sentence is sufficient to guarantee the interest and the respect of the reader and the importance of the entire revelation it purposes to give. He who began to read would not be likely to lay the letter aside until he had seen whether the promise of the beginning was fulfilled in the further discussion and made good at the close. A man who could write that first sentence did not need any commendation from any extraneous sources.

He must have been well known to those who first received the epistle. It was delivered to them by some accredited messenger and they knew from whom it had come. He evidently was an intimate friend. They must have known his literary powers, and his style was familiar to them. In all probability that first sentence was in itself a sufficient authentication. There was somebody in the early church who could write an epistle equal to any epistle of Paul. The fact that everybody knew him then seemed to render it unnecessary to chronicle his name. So to-day he is to us The Great Unknown.

This is one of the strangest facts in all literature, that the writer of so important a document as this should have left no trace of his name upon church history. It seems incredible that the composer of such a masterpiece should not have been commemorated in some way in the annals of the Christian community. The names of Paul and Peter and James

and John and Jude were attached to their epistles from the very beginning in the tradition of the church. Here is an epistle which is of far greater importance than many of the epistles ascribed to these men, and yet as far back as we can trace the history of it in the literature of the Fathers there seems to have been uncertainty as to its authorship. We find guesses concerning its source, but nobody seems to know anything of a surety on the subject.

The epistle is worthy to rank with any of the books of the New Testament. It is one of the greatest among them. The church has preserved a tradition concerning the authorship of all the rest of them. This one book is unique in that it alone is anonymous. The Authorized Version and the English Revised Version print as the title to the book, "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews," but modern scholarship has disputed and disproved this ascription of authorship, and the American Revised Version is content with the title, "The Epistle to the Hebrews"; leaving it, as it should be, anonymous. The very cloud of mystery which surrounded it on even its advent into the canonical literature and through all its subsequent history makes it a fascinating subject of study. Since no one can speak for it, we look with all the more interest to see what it has to say for itself.

2. As a piece of literature the Epistle to the Hebrews takes first rank in the New Testament. It has a classic elegance of structure which is not approached in any other New Testament book. There are passages in the writings of Luke in which he seems to swing clear of his Hebraistic sources and rival the classic historians of Greece in his style, but these passages are only occasional with him. In the Epistle to the Hebrews the composition is elegant and classical throughout. It has most to do with the Hebrew history and religious ritual. It is addressed to the Hebrews alone in the early church. Yet it is freer from Hebraisms than any other

New Testament book, and it is characterized by a purer Greek style.

Blass says, "The Epistle to the Hebrews is the only piece of writing in the New Testament which in structure of sentences and style shows the care and dexterity of an artistic writer."[2] Zahn agrees, "The author of Hebrews is . . . a teacher rhetorically trained, who, notwithstanding all the earnestness of his concern for the salvation of his readers, nevertheless makes it a point to put his thoughts into artistic and rhythmical language."[3] Deissmann is disposed to call it a literary oration, with some epistolary greetings at the close. Hebrews begins like a treatise, proceeds like an oration, and ends like a letter. Yet it is a masterpiece of literary composition.

No one has spoken more appreciatively of the epistle than that greatest scholar of early Methodism, Adam Clarke. He says: "Never were premises more clearly stated; never was an argument handled in a more masterly manner, and never was a conclusion more legitimately and satisfactorily brought forth. The matter is everywhere the most interesting, the manner is throughout the most engaging, and the language is most beautifully adapted to the whole, everywhere appropriate, always nervous and energetic, dignified as is the subject, pure and elegant as that of the most accomplished Grecian orators, and harmonious and diversified as the music of the spheres. So many are the beauties, so great the excellency, so instructive the matter, so pleasing the manner, and so exceedingly interesting the whole, that the work may be read a hundred times over without perceiving anything of sameness, and with new and increased information at each reading. This latter is an excellency which belongs to the whole revelation of God; but to no part of it in such a peculiar and supereminent manner as to

[2] Grammar of New Testament Greek, p. 296.

[3] Zahn, Introduction to the New Testament, vol. ii, p. 353.

the Epistle to the Hebrews."[4] It is strange enough that any epistle in the New Testament should be anonymous, but that this literary masterpiece among the epistles should be anonymous seems doubly strange.

3. This epistle is the most important single epistle in the New Testament because it stands for a distinct type of Christian thought. The biblical theologies give a separate section to the Epistle to the Hebrews. They usually distinguish the theology of the synoptic Gospels, the theology of the Pauline Epistles, and the theology of the Johannine books. The Epistle to the Hebrews gives a fourth distinct department of New Testament theology, ranking with the other three in the importance of its presentation of the thought of the apostolic church. Reuss calls it "the first systematic treatise of Christian theology."[5] It has affinities with all the other New Testament books, but at the same time it has characteristics which mark it as unique. As in its authorship and its literary merit, so in its method of the presentation of Christian truth, it stands alone.

Friedlander says it is "the strangest book in the New Testament. It is a Janus head with two faces, one Pauline and the other Jewish." Therefore it would seem to be placed very properly in our New Testament canon between the Pauline Epistles on the one hand and the Jewish epistles of James and Peter and Jude on the other. Its theological position is thus fairly defined. It stands in closer affinity with the Hellenistic and Alexandrian type of theology and thought than any other New Testament book. As its purer Greek and its better literary construction might indicate, its author seems to have come into more intimate relations with the outside world and to be more sympathetic with the Apocryphal and Alexandrian literature and philosophy and

[4] Preface to Commentary, p. 1.
[5] History of Christian Theology, ii, 241.

method of scriptural exegesis than any of the more Jewish writers of the New Testament books.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is full of strange paradoxes at every point, and none of them is stranger than this, that the one book expressly addressed to the Hebrews should be the one book in the New Testament which is most fully emancipated from Hebrew narrowness and most fully impregnated with the spirit of the Greek classics and philosophy. As it mediates between Pauline and Jewish theology, so it mediates between Hebrew revelation and Greek philosophy. In our New Testament it represents the Philonian endeavor to adapt the ancient faith to contemporary conditions and current schools of thought. Its whole argument depends upon the assumption of the typical and symbolical and spiritual meaning of the Old Testament ritual of worship. To the author of this epistle all the temporal and material appointments of the Jewish temple and priesthood were but allegories of eternal and spiritual realities. The allegorical and spiritual interpretation of Scripture always will find one of its justifications in the canonical authority of this book. Tholuck says of the epistle: "It is a complete illustration of the words of Augustine, Novum Testamentum in Vetere latet, Vetus in Novo patet."

4. The epistle is most interesting in itself. Origen said, "The thoughts of the epistle are wonderful, and not second to the acknowledged writings of Paul."[6] Even Luther declared, "Das ist eine starke, mächtige, und höhe epistel," and again, "It certainly is a wondrously fine epistle, which speaks in a masterly and solid way of the priesthood of Christ, and finely and fully expounds the Old Testament."[7] Edwards, one of its modern commentators, calls it "one of the greatest and most difficult books of the New Testament."[8] Philip

[6] Eusebius, Hist. Eccl., vi, 25, 12.

[7] Luther's Werke, Walch ed., xiv, 147.

[8] Expositor's Bible, The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. v.

Schaff says: "Obscure in its origin, it is clear and deep in its knowledge of Christ. Hailing from the second generation of Christians, it is full of pentecostal inspiration. Traceable to no apostle, it teaches, exhorts, and warns with apostolic authority and power."[9]

Delitzsch declares, "The Epistle to the Hebrews has not its like among the epistles of the New Testament, resembling in this uniqueness of position, as well as in tone and spirit, the great prophetic exhortation of Isa. 40-66, which in like manner stands alone among the prophetic writings of the Old Testament. The tone of thought in both these portions of Scripture has the same transcendental character; each has a threefold division of its contents; the same majestic march and flight of language characterizes each, the same Easter-morning breath from another world, and the same tantalizing veil suspended before the eyes of the vexed inquirer, now half revealing, now concealing the origin and authorship of either composition. No other book of the New Testament is distinguished by such brilliant eloquence and euphonious rhythm as our epistle; and this rhetorical form is not superinduced on the subject, but is its true expression, as setting forth the special glories of the new covenant and of a new and Christ-transfigured world. Old and New Testaments are set the one over against the other, the moonlight of the Old Testament paling once and again before the sunrise of the New, and the heavenly prospect thus illumined."[10]

If the estimates of these scholars are warranted by the contents of the epistle they are well worth studying for themselves alone; but these contents become doubly interesting to us when we find that they are remarkably applicable in all their teaching to the present day. Westcott says: "Every student of the Epistle to the Hebrews must

[9] Schaff, *op. cit.*, p. 810.

[10] Delitzsch, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

feel that it deals in a peculiar degree with the thoughts and the trials of our own time. . . . The difficulties which come to us through physical facts and theories, through criticism, through wider views of human history, correspond with those which came to Jewish Christians at the close of the apostolic age, and they will find their solution also in fuller views of the Person and Work of Christ."[11] Vaughan writes: "Epistle, treatise, and homily in one, no generation needed it more than our own, and the growing attention paid to it shows that the need is felt."[12] The author of this epistle was a scholar and a philosopher, and his exposition of Christianity is the earliest we have from such a source. He combined within himself some of the best features of the later Antiochian and Alexandrian schools, and his methods and interpretations are valid to-day.

5. There is another particular in which this epistle differs from every other New Testament book. The Eastern and the Western churches in the beginning were arrayed against each other on the question of its authorship. The Eastern church thought that Paul was its author. The Western church seemed to be sure that he was not.

II. The Early History of the Epistle in the East

1. As far as we can learn the Eastern church from the very beginning and without any exception regarded the epistle as canonical. The first synod to make official declaration that it was Pauline was that of Antioch, A. D. 204. 2. It was the tradition at Alexandria that Paul wrote the epistle. This tradition can be traced back as far as to Pantænus, about the middle of the second century. It is supposed that he is quoted by Clement of Alexandria in a passage found only in Eusebius. The tradition comes to us, therefore, only at third hand, and it runs as follows:

[11] Westcott, Commentary on The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. v.

[12] Vaughan, The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. xi.

"The blessed presbyter said, since the Lord being the apostle of the Almighty was sent to the Hebrews, Paul as sent to the Gentiles, on account of his modesty did not subscribe himself an apostle of the Hebrews, through respect for the Lord, and because being a herald and apostle of the Gentiles he wrote to the Hebrews out of his superabundance."[13]

Pantænus, or whoever is being quoted in this passage, gives three reasons for Paul's omission of his own name in the epistle; his modesty, his respect for the Lord, and the superabundance of his writing. These three reasons seem to be somewhat inconsistent with each other, and none of them seems sufficient or satisfactory. Paul never was modest about his apostleship. He proclaimed it boldly everywhere, to the Jews as well as to the Gentiles. His commission was to all men, and he preached to the Jews first and by preference and turned to the Gentiles only when rejected by them. If Paul had written this epistle, it never would have occurred to him that he ought to be modest about his apostolic ministry to the Hebrews. He might be modest about some things, but he never was modest about that.

Then, surely, it would have been a strange exhibition of modesty and of reverence for the Lord if Paul had suppressed his name and at the same time had assumed apostolic authority in the writing of the epistle. If respect for the Lord would suggest the omission of his name, surely the same respect would have precluded the writing of the epistle itself. Then, too, the suggestion of superabundance in Paul's writing to Hebrews when he was the apostle to the Gentiles seems scarcely consistent with either modesty or respect for his Lord; for again, if he felt that he had no business to write to them he ought to have suppressed the whole epistle as well as his name.

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[13] Church History, VI, 14:4, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, I, p. 261.

This suggestion of a conscious and motived suppression of the author's name seems an erroneous one. The writer of this epistle had no thought of concealing his identity from those who received it. He tells them that Timothy has been released from prison and he hopes soon to visit them in Timothy's company.[14] Calvin asks with all reasonableness why he should say such things as these, if he did not want his readers to know who he was. Evidently, it had not occurred to him that any question would be raised as to his identity. No apostolic church would have received this epistle or given any heed to its appeal, if it had not known where it came from and whose authority was behind it. We believe that if Paul had written this epistle he would have put his name and his apostolic authority in its forefront, even as he has in all his other epistles, and we have no slightest disposition to suspect that, as Delitzsch and Whedon suggest, Paul would occultly indicate his authorship of the epistle by beginning it with three Greek words whose first syllable resembled his name in sound![15] This modern absurdity of interpretation is worse than anything which "the blessed presbyter" suggested.

3. Eusebius again is our authority for the opinion of Clement of Alexandria himself in this matter. He informs us that Clement said that "the Epistle to the Hebrews is the work of Paul, and that it was written to the Hebrews in the Hebrew language; but that Luke translated it carefully and published it for the Greeks. . . . But he says that the words, 'Paul, the Apostle,' were probably not prefixed, because in sending it to the Hebrews, who were prejudiced and suspicious of him, he wisely did not wish to repel them at the very beginning by giving his name."[16] Now, the Epistle to

[14] Heb. 13. 23.

[15] Πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως πάλαι, Heb. 1. 1.

[16] Eusebius, *op. cit.*, VI, 14:3, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, I, p. 261.

the Hebrews bears every mark of having been written originally in Greek. Its paronomasia are possible only in Greek; and many of its compound words are so purely Greek that they have no terms to correspond with them in the Aramaic or the Hebrew. It surely would be strange if the best Greek in the New Testament should be found in a translation from a Hebrew original; and no trace of such an original ever has been found. It would seem, therefore, that no book in the New Testament is as little likely to be a translation from the Hebrew as the Epistle to the Hebrews.

4. Origen frequently quotes from the Epistle to the Hebrews as of Pauline authorship, and in the Epistle to Africanus he says that some deny Paul's authorship, and he adds that he will elsewhere give a confutation of their views; but if he ever essayed to do so, the writing upon this subject has been lost. In his later life he seems to have been more doubtful concerning the authorship of the epistle, and Eusebius quotes from his Homilies upon it the following statements. "That the verbal style of the epistle entitled 'To The Hebrews,' is not rude like the language of the apostle, who acknowledged himself rude in speech, that is, in expression; but that its diction is purer Greek, anyone who has the power to discern differences of phraseology will acknowledge. . . . If I gave my opinion, I should say that the thoughts are those of the apostle, but the diction and phraseology are those of some one who remembered the apostolic teachings, and wrote down at his leisure what had been said by his teacher. Therefore if any church holds that this epistle is by Paul, let it be commended for this. For not without reason have the ancients handed it down as Paul's. But who wrote the epistle, in truth, God knows."[17]

It is to be noted that Origen's conclusion here, "Who wrote the epistle, in truth, God knows," has to do primarily

[17] Eusebius, *op. cit.*, VI, 25:11-14, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, I, p. 273. *τίς δὲ ὁ γράψας τὴν ἐπιστολήν, τὸ μὲν ἀληθὲς θεὸς οἶδεν.*

with the amanuensis whom he conceives to be some disciple of Paul and dependent upon Paul for his doctrine. The modern judgment is that this uncertainty of authorship extends beyond the amanuensis to the actual author, and Zahn in his comment upon this passage from Origen says that Origen "defends a single church holding this view [of the Pauline authorship] against the judgment of the other churches. It cannot be shown that this opinion was held at that time anywhere outside of Egypt, nor subsequently in any place not under the influence of Alexandrian scholars."[18]

5. Dionysius and Athanasius ascribe the epistle to Paul.

6. The epistle is in the Peshito, and it has the same position as in our Bible. It follows the epistles of Paul, but does not have his name attached. However, the Syrian Church in general believed that Paul wrote it.

III. The Early History of the Epistle in the West

The earliest traces of the Epistle to the Hebrews are to be found at Rome. It was known in that city before the close of the first century.

1. Clement of Rome values the epistle quite highly. He quotes from it freely and its thought seems to have influenced him largely. Overbeck says, "The fact is unmistakable that the letter of Clement makes use of Hebrews without acknowledgment, at times copying it outright."[19] Holtzmann counts forty-seven correspondences between the Epistle of Clement and the Epistle to the Hebrews.[20] These consist of literal quotations and borrowed phrases and similar sentiments. It surely is noteworthy that Clement never claims the authority of Paul for any of these. This silence on his part almost becomes positive evidence against

[18] Zahn, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 300.

[19] Overbeck, Zur Geschichte des Kanons, S. 3.

[20] Holtzmann, Einleitung in das Neue Testament, S. 237.

the Pauline authorship, in view of the later opinion in Rome on that point.

2. The Roman presbyter Caius made a canonical list and included in it thirteen epistles of Paul; but he did not reckon the Epistle to the Hebrews among them.

3. The Muratorian Fragment does the same thing.

4. In the extant writings of Irenæus and Hippolytus there is no clear use of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Photius, in the ninth century, quoted from a writing of Stephen Gobar of the sixth century, in which he stated that both Irenæus, A. D. 180, and Hippolytus, A. D. 215, declared that the epistle was not Paul's.

5. Tertullian is clear enough in his testimony. He was a man of most decided opinions in all matters, and he tells us that the epistle was written by Barnabas, a comrade of the apostles and a man sufficiently accredited by God.[21]

6. Cyprian names seven churches to which Paul, like the Apocalyptist, wrote.[22] Down to his time, A. D. 300, the Western church seems to have been sure that Paul did not write the epistle, and they were disposed to regard it as of somewhat less than canonical authority.

7. Jerome, A. D. 400, lived in the East but belonged to the West. In quoting the epistle he says, "Paul, or whoever wrote it, says," and again, "No matter who wrote it, since it is the work of an orthodox member of the church."[23]

8. Augustine accepted the epistle as canonical; but both he and Jerome seem to prefer to describe it in general terms, as the epistle which is written to the Hebrews, and to avoid the ascription of it to Paul.

9. The Synod of Hippo, A. D. 393, put the epistle into the canon, saying that there were "thirteen epistles of the apostle Paul, and one by the same to the Hebrews." The fourth

[21] Tertullian, De Pudic., 20. Ante-Nicene Fathers, IV, p. 97.

[22] Testim. adv. Jud., i, 20. De Exhort. Mart., 11.

[23] Comm. in Amos, viii, 7, 8, and Comm. in Jerem., xxxi, 31f.

synod of Carthage, A. D. 397, and the fifth synod of Carthage, A. D. 419, admitted Hebrews to the canon and the latter reckoned "fourteen epistles of the apostle Paul." The epistle has been of unquestioned canonicity in the church since that date. The epistle was placed after the Pauline epistles, as a sort of appendix to them in both the Eastern and Western Bibles.

No Western writer in the first three centuries ascribes the epistle to Paul. The first one to do so was Hilary, late in the fourth century. The negative and positive testimony against the Pauline authorship in the West ought to be regarded as a weighty one, since the epistle was first known here. Even into the fifth century Jerome and Augustine doubted the Pauline authorship; but the influence of the Eastern church prevailed from this time and the epistle was not only received as canonical but was generally believed to be Pauline until the time of the Reformation.

IV. Opinions of Modern Scholars

1. Erasmus said, "Though most clearly akin to the soul and spirit of Paul, we may gather from very many arguments that it was written by some other than Paul."[24]

2. Luther put it into the appendix to his Bible, separating it from the Pauline Epistles and placing it after the epistles of Peter and John. He said, "We do not place it absolutely on the same footing with the apostolic epistles."[25]

3. Melanchthon always treated the epistle as anonymous.

4. Zwingli considered it both canonical and Pauline.

5. Calvin said, "Without doubt it is an apostolic epistle. . . . I cannot myself be brought to believe that Paul is the author."[26] The Geneva Bible of 1560 omitted the name

[24] Westcott, On the Canon of the New Testament, p. 471.
[25] Luther's Werke, Walch ed., xiv, 147.
[26] Com. on Hebrews, p. xxvii.

of Paul from the title, and said in the preface, "We know not with what pen the Spirit of God wrote it."

6. Beza said, "It was truly dictated by the Holy Spirit; and it is written in so excellent and so exact a method that unless we can suppose that Apollos wrote it, whose learning and eloquence combined with the greatest piety are so highly praised in the Acts, scarcely anyone except Paul could have been the writer."[27]

7. Grotius declared, "It is most obvious that the epistle was not written by Paul himself from the difference in style."[28]

8. Weiss says, "Since Bleek, 1828, the view of the Pauline composition may from a scientific standpoint be regarded as set aside."[29]

9. Farrar concludes, "It is the now all but universal opinion of critics that the epistle was not written by Paul himself and not by any apostle."[30]

10. Bacon says, "Since Simon's day an ever-increasing number of scholars agree with the verdict of Origen as to Hebrews, God only knows who wrote it; moderns adding, however, that Paul certainly did not."

11. Bruce, in Hastings's Bible Dictionary, dismisses the subject with this sentence, "That the apostle was not the author of it is now so generally admitted that it is hardly worth while discussing the question."[31] It may be well, however, to review some of the reasons which have led these scholars to conclude against the Pauline authorship.

V. Arguments Against Pauline Authorship

1. **The Difference of Style.** Origen felt this with his keen critical sense, and although all the tradition of the church

[27] Preface to Com. on Hebrews. [28] Praef. ad Hebr.

[29] Weiss, Introduction, vol. ii, p. 3.

[30] Farrar, Messages of the Books, pp. 434–435.

[31] Hastings's Bible Dictionary, vol. ii, p. 335.

there at Alexandria was against him, he declared that the style of this epistle was not the style of Paul, and that any one who could discern differences of phraseology would acknowledge this. It has been a decisive argument against the Pauline authorship from Origen's day to the present time. However, it appeals only to those who have a literary sense. Some people almost wholly lack this, and they may be able to believe that the man who wrote the Second Epistle to the Corinthians also could have written the Epistle to the Hebrews, though the one is like a raging sea and the other as smooth as a millpond.

In all of Paul's epistles the style is of secondary consideration. His sentences are full of solecisms and anacolutha. He is interested in the thought and cares little for the form.[32] On the other hand, the author of this epistle constructs his sentences with great care and arranges his arguments in the most approved and classical order. His periods are well rounded, and his whole composition follows the rules of the schools from the proemium to the epilogue.[33] Farrar says: "He is never ungrammatical, never irregular, never personal; he never struggles for expression; he never loses himself in a parenthesis; he is never hurried into an unfinished clause. He has less of burning passion and more of conscious literary self-control. . . . His movement resembles that of an Oriental sheik with his robes of honor wrapped about him. The movement of Paul is like that of an athlete girded for a race. The eloquence of this writer even when it is at its most majestic volume resembles the flow of a river. The rhetoric of Paul is like the rush of a mountain torrent amid opposing rocks."[34]

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[32] Hayes, Paul and His Epistles, pp. 73–123.

[33] The *προοίμιον πρὸς εὔνοιαν* in 1. 1 to 4. 13, the *πρόθεσις*, followed by the *διήγησις πρὸς πιθανότητα*, 4. 14–6. 20; *ἀπόδειξις πρὸς πειθώ*, 7. 1–10. 18, and the *ἐπίλογος*, 10. 19–13. 21.

[34] Farrar, Early Days of Christianity, pp. 191, 192, 193.

Rendall contrasts the two styles in the following terms: "Dialectical subtlety, impetuous bursts of natural eloquence, mighty thoughts struggling for expression in disjointed sentences are the characteristic features of Paul's style. Rhetorical skill, studied antithesis, even flow of faultless grammar, and measured march of rhythmical periods, combine to stamp upon this epistle a distinct and unique character of its own."[35]

However, was not the apostle Paul a very versatile man, and could he not have written in different styles? We think not. We think that Paul was one of those men of whom it is most true that the style is the man. His epistles all reveal the same personality and all have the same characteristics. When we turn from them to the Epistle to the Hebrews we are conscious of passing into a different atmosphere, and we feel that the character of the man who wrote it was radically different from that of Paul. Paul revealed himself in all that he wrote. He could not have concealed himself as the author of this epistle has.

Could Wendell Phillips have written one of Daniel Webster's orations? We doubt it. He might have made the attempt, but his nervous and straightaway style never could have compassed the Olympian sonorousness of Webster's high-sounding periods. Neither could Webster have written one of Wendell Phillips's orations. He might have made the attempt, but the ponderous movement of his mind never could have accommodated itself to the rapierlike thrust of Phillips' style.

Suppose an oration of either one of these men had been lost and it should be discovered to-day, would there be any difficulty in deciding to which one of the two it belonged? If the lost oration had been written by Phillips, when it was compared with the acknowledged orations of Webster, would

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[35] Rendall, Theology of the Hebrew Christians, p. 27.

not anyone be able to discern the differences of style? Could there be any hesitation in deciding that it could not have been written by Webster? If we had no other orations of Phillips with which to compare it, nevertheless would it not be certain that whoever the author might be, and even if his name never might be ascertained, Webster at least never could have composed it? Now, the difference between Paul and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews is something like the difference between Wendell Phillips and Webster. It is a difference of style indicative of a difference of character. Anyone who can discern differences of style, as Origen said, will acknowledge that these writings could not have sprung from the same source. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews was a different man from the writer of the Pauline Epistles.

Bleek and Tholuck have noted the following special peculiarities of style in the Epistle to the Hebrews: (1) The intransitive use of *καθίζειν*, "to sit," 1. 3; 8. 1, and elsewhere. (2) The use of *ἐάνπερ*, "even though," where Paul always uses *εἴγε*, "if at least." (3) The use of *ὅθεν* in the sense of "wherefore." (4) The use of *εἰς τὸ διηνεκές*, "to perpetuity," and *εἰς τὸ παντελές*, 7. 3, 25; 10. 1, 12, 14, for Paul's *πάντοτε*, "always," which is not a good Greek word. (5) The use of *παρά* and *ὑπέρ* after comparatives.[36]

Rendall in his study of the differences between the two authors says: "Diversity of style is more easily felt by the reader than expressed by the critic, without at least a tedious analysis of language: one simple and tangible test presents itself, however, in the use of connecting particles, inasmuch as these determine the structure of sentences. A minute comparison of these possesses, therefore, real importance in the differentiation of language. Now in the epistles of Paul, *εἴτις* occurs fifty times, *εἴτε* sixty-three,

[36] Quoted in Farrar, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

ποτε in affirmative clauses nineteen, εἶτα in enumerations six, εἰ δὲ καί four, εἴπερ five, ἐκτὸς εἰ μή three, εἴγε four, μήπως twelve, μηκέτι ten, μενοῦνγε three, ἐάν eighty-eight times, while none of them are found in the Epistle to the Hebrews except ἐάν and that only once, or twice, except in quotations. On the other hand, ὅθεν, which occurs six times, and ἐάνπερ, which occurs three times in the epistle, are never used by Paul."[37] Even if a man sat down consciously to attempt to conceal his natural style and to imitate or invent a new one, the imitation or invention would not be likely to descend to such small particulars as these connecting particles. They stand as unobtrusive but convincing thumbprints of a different identity.

2. **The Difference of Language.** (1) There is a difference in vocabulary. Professor Gardiner made a minute investigation of the language of the Epistle to the Hebrews. He began that investigation with the belief that the thought of the epistle was Pauline and the phraseology was Lucan. He had supposed that the Alexandrian Fathers were right who had suggested that Paul furnished the ideas and arguments and Luke put them into good Greek form. The result of his prolonged study was to change his views upon these subjects.

He stated his conclusion as follows: "There are many words and groups of words expressing ideas very prominently in the mind of the author of this epistle which must have appeared also in the writings of Paul had the thoughts of this epistle been derived from him, but which are not found there. Of course no man expresses all his ideas in any one epistle, nor the same ideas in every one he writes; but the difference here is more radical. As one mind now is affected by one, and another by another of the various aspects of Christian truth, so the differences here go to show

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[37] Rendall, *op. cit.*, p. 27, n. 1.

that the mind of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews was not affected in the same way as Paul; for Hebrews is scarcely more unlike the epistles in which Paul addressed believing Jews than the speeches recorded in Acts 13, 22, and 28, in which he spoke to his still unbelieving countrymen."[38]

Probably no more thorough research ever has been given to this aspect of the epistle than that of Professor Gardiner, and his conclusion, therefore, is entitled to preëminent respect. We need not follow him into all the details of his investigation. It will be sufficient to note that Thayer in his Lexicon of New Testament Greek gives a list of one hundred and sixty-nine words in the Epistle to the Hebrews not found elsewhere in the Greek Scriptures, and that Gardiner shows by a computation of the number of peculiar words to the line or lines of the Greek Testament that Paul, Luke, and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews have the richest vocabularies among the writers of the New Testament, and that Luke has a richer vocabulary than Paul, but that the writer of Hebrews has a vocabulary surpassing that of Luke more than he surpasses that of Paul. In the comparative number of new and peculiar words in his vocabulary the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, then, is not only to be distinguished from Paul but is preëminent among the writers of the New Testament.

(2) There is a corresponding difference in the choice of words. Rendall says, "The two authors differ materially in language: Paul was not free from Hebraism, and derives force from the simplicity of his language: the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews expresses himself in idiomatic and polished Greek and delights in the pomp of stately phrases and full-sounding derivatives."[39] Weiss declares that no

[38] Journal of Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, June, 1887, p. 20.

[39] Rendall, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

writing in the New Testament is so free from Hebraisms as this epistle.[40] This fact alone would go far to prove that Paul could not have been its author. Godet says very pertinently, "It is strange indeed that Paul should have written in polished Greek to the Hebrews, while all his life he had been writing to the Hellenes in a style abounding with rugged and barbarous Hebraisms."[41]

There are some Hebraisms in this epistle, 3. 12; 9. 5; 12. 15, but they are comparatively few, and Origen was right in declaring it ἑλληνικωτέρα, purer Greek than that of Paul.

(3) Some of the most characteristic expressions in the writings of Paul are wholly lacking here. We instance a few examples. (*a*) The word εὐαγγέλιον, "gospel," found in all the Pauline epistles except Titus, does not occur once in this epistle. (*b*) The word σωτήρ, "savior," is found twelve times in Paul, but does not occur in this epistle. (*c*) The words so characteristic of the Pauline theology, μυστήριον, "mystery," and οἰκοδομεῖν, "to edify," and δικαιοῦν, "to justify," are not found in this epistle. (*d*) The word φῶς, "light," occurs in every other book of the New Testament, and is used twelve times by Paul, but it is not found in Hebrews or the short epistle of Jude. (*e*) The word χαίρω, "be joyful, rejoice," occurs in every other book in the New Testament, and is used twenty-seven times by Paul, but it is not found in Hebrews or Jude. (*f*) On the contrary, the word ἱερεύς and its compounds and derivatives occur one hundred and fifty-nine times in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and not one of these words is to be found anywhere in the epistles of Paul. (*g*) The phrase, ἐν Χριστῷ, "in Christ," in which it has been said that the whole of the Pauline theology is summed up, does not occur in this epistle.

(*h*) Paul says, "Our Lord Jesus Christ" and "Jesus Christ our Lord" sixty-eight times in his epistles. In this

[40] Weiss, Introduction vol. ii, p. 5.

[41] Godet, Studies in the Epistles, p. 332.

epistle we have "Jesus" or "Christ" or "Lord," but the three names never are joined together as in Paul. The double name, "Christ Jesus," so often found in Paul, never occurs here. The double name, "Jesus Christ," with the order reversed, occurs three times.[42] The name "the Lord" for Christ occurs only twice.[43] The name "Lord Jesus" occurs only once.[44] Paul uses these names over six hundred times. These again are differences which by the very casualness of their character bear the more unmistakable evidence to a difference of authorship.

3. **Difference in Method of Argument.** Paul always keeps to his argument until it has been completed and then turns to practical exhortations founded upon the dogmatic basis thus laid down. The Pauline Epistles may thus be separated into two chief divisions, the doctrinal and the practical, and they always come in that order.[45] In the Epistle to the Hebrews the hortatory portions are scattered throughout the epistle, instead of being kept to the close. Each separate portion of the argument has its appropriate exhortation appended to it, and the completion of the argument is deferred again and again until these exhortations have been interpolated.

Paul could not have brooked such interruptions. He was an athlete, running with his eye on the goal. That goal had to be reached before he paused to take breath or to gather up the fruits of his victory. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews is in no hurry. He stops to clinch each step of his discussion with an exhortation which will drive home that particular portion of the truth. See the exhortations of 2. 1-4; 3. 7-19; 4. 14-16; 5. 11–6. 20; 10. 19-39, as well as 12. 1–13. 19. Here is a clear distinction from all the epistles of Paul.

4. **Different Beginning and Ending.** All of the Pauline

[42] Heb. 10. 10; 13. 8, 21. [43] Heb. 2. 3; 7. 14. [44] Heb. 13. 20.
[45] Hayes, Paul and His Epistles, p. 69.

epistles have an opening thanksgiving or a closing salutation and subscription in his own name.[46] This epistle has none of these things. The reasons suggested for this difference by the Alexandrian Fathers upon the supposition of the Pauline authorship never have seemed satisfactory and no one can suggest any other or better reasons to-day.

If Paul had written this epistle, it seems to us that he would have been all the more likely to begin it with a conciliatory address, allaying as far as might be any prejudice against himself personally and so preparing the way for his message. The writer of this epistle, on the contrary, does not feel the need of anything of the kind. He plunges at once into his subject, like Cæsar in his Commentaries. His first sentence betrays not the suppliant for a hearing but the herald sure of a favorable reception for his message and anxious only to make clear the imperial worth of that message itself. This difference, if it stood alone, might not be sufficient to prove that Paul had not varied his usual custom for once and for some reason unknown; but in connection with all these other differences it must be accorded its due weight in deciding the matter at issue.

5. The Use of a Different Bible Text. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews never uses a Hebrew Bible. His authoritative text evidently is the text of the Septuagint. When the Septuagint gives an incorrect translation of the Hebrew, as in the quotation in Heb. 10. 5, where the Septuagint reads, "A body hast thou prepared me," but the Hebrew Bible has, "Mine ears hast thou pierced," the writer of this epistle does not correct the Greek by the Hebrew, as Paul very often does, but, on the contrary, he seems to be sublimely unconscious that his text is not the original and inspired Scripture, and he makes the mistranslation bear the brunt of his argument at this point.

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[46] Hayes, Paul and His Epistles, p. 69.

Besides this continuous and uncorrected use of the Greek version of the Old Testament which distinguishes this author from Paul, he seems to use a different text of the Septuagint in all of his quotations. Paul uses what we call the Codex Vaticanus. The author of Hebrews always cites the Codex Alexandrinus. Wherever these two codices differ with each other in their reading Paul uses the one text and our author the other. There are three quotations from the Old Testament in the Epistle to the Hebrews which do not correspond exactly either with the Septuagint or the Hebrew, namely, Gen. 22. 16f. in Heb. 6. 13f.; Exod. 24. 8 in Heb. 9. 20; and Deut. 32. 35 in Heb. 10. 30. These differences may be due to inexact memory or they may be current and traditional forms of these texts. It is noteworthy that the last of the three is found in Rom. 12. 19 in exactly the same form as in Hebrews. Both Paul and our author may have adopted a popular variant reading at this point, preserved in the Targum of Onkelos.

6. Difference in Quotation. There is a characteristic difference in the form of citation from the Old Testament. (1) There are twenty-nine quotations from the Old Testament in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Of these, twenty-one are peculiar to this epistle among the New Testament books. Twenty-three of them are taken from the Pentateuch and the Psalter. All but two of the primary passages quoted as referring to the Person and the work of Christ are from the Psalms. The two exceptions are from 2 Sam. 1. 5 and Isa. 2. 13.[47]

(2) In the epistles of Paul we find Isaiah and other Old Testament writers quoted by name sometimes, but in this epistle the name of a human author does not occur from beginning to end. There is an apparent exception to this statement in 4. 7, but the exception is only apparent and

[47] Compare Westcott's essay "On the Use of the Old Testament in the Epistles," in his Commentary.

not real. Bruce has suggested that it is only fitting that the author of an epistle which begins by virtually claiming God as the only speaker in Scripture,[48] and Jesus as the one speaker in the New Testament, should suppress his own name throughout the epistle; but all other names of human speakers and authors are omitted as well as his own. God has spoken in the ages past through many men, God has spoken to this age through his Son. In the presence of the Son we lose sight of all lesser lights. We listen to God and to God speaking through Jesus, and all minor authorities retire into the background. Their identity is of comparatively little importance or of no importance at all. The all-important thing in connection with them is that God had spoken through them, and therefore they had divine authority for their message.

(3) In this epistle the formulæ of citation are "God saith" and "the Holy Spirit saith" and "He testifieth" and "somewhere some one testified, saying." Paul never uses these introductory phrases. He says, "Isaiah testifies," or "Scripture says," or "it has been written." This last formula occurs sixteen times in the Epistle to the Romans alone. If Paul wrote this epistle, no one can suggest any reason why he should not have his customary formulæ in it. The consistent and persistent use of different formulæ points to a different authorship.

7. The Affiliation with the Alexandrian Literature and Theology. (1) There is a larger use of the apocryphal books of the Old Testament than we find in the writings of Paul.

(2) The Epistle to the Hebrews has so many and so close parallels with the Book of Wisdom, an Alexandrian apocryphal book of this period, that Noack and Dean Plumptre have decided that both were written by the same

[48] Heb. 1. 1.

man, one before and the other after his conversion to Christianity. The two books are alike in their sonorous style, their use of compound words, their preference for unusual terms, and their accumulation of epithets. Clement of Rome used both books. Irenæus mentions them together, as if they might have come from the same source. They are mentioned in close juxtaposition in the Muratorian Fragment. Some of the most unusual terms occur in both books, and they both represent an attitude of dependence upon Philo and of acquaintance with his works. So great is the affinity between them in style, in language, in method of argument, as well as in their underlying philosophy and their presentation of contemporary Alexandrian thought, that it surely comes within the realm of possibility that the same man may have written them; and in any case all of these things differentiate them from all of the writings of Paul.

(3) Philo was the great master of the Jewish-Alexandrian school. His formulation of the Logos teaching prepared the way for the Logos doctrine of the New Testament. John seems to have made the largest use of Philo's philosophy at this point. The apostle Paul gives little evidence of having been influenced by it. The Epistle to the Hebrews differs from all other books in the New Testament in the representation of the Philonian philosophy throughout. The parallels are most numerous and striking, as a glance at the introductory verses will show.

Did Philo call the Logos God's utterance and give him the supereminent title of God's Son?[49] In Heb. 1.2 we are introduced to the Christ with the phrase, "God . . . hath at the end of these days spoken to us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things." Did Philo say, "The instrument in the creation of the cosmos was God's Logos, through whom it was prepared?"[50] In Hebrews we read

[49] Agr. Noe, 12. [50] Cher., 35.

of the Christ, "Through whom also he made the worlds!" (1. 2). Did Philo call the Logos the image of God[51] and say of him, He "is the bond of all things, and holds together and binds all the parts, and prevents them from being dissolved and separated"?[52] In the first sentence of the Epistle to the Hebrews we read, God's Son is "the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power" (1. 3).

Did Philo compare the Logos with the angels and give him the title of supremacy over them saying, "If any one, however, is not yet worthy to be called a son of God, let him be zealous to be adorned in accordance with his firstborn Logos, the oldest angel . . . for he is called Beginning, and Name of God, etc."?[53] In Hebrews we read, He "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; having become by so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name than they" (1. 3, 4). Did Philo call the Logos the Firstborn and God?[54] See these titles again appearing in Hebrews, "When he again bringeth in the firstborn into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him" (1. 6), and "Of the Son *he saith,* Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever" (1. 8). In these eight verses of introduction to the Epistle to the Hebrews, in which the being, doing, and supremacy of the Son are described, we have at least eight points of contact with the phraseology and formulation of the Logos doctrine of Philo. Can this be mere accident? If so, it must be acknowledged that this epistle is unlike all others in the New Testament in being strangely full of them.

Did Philo elaborately busy himself to show how in all details the description of the high priest in the Old Testament made him a fit symbol of the Logos, the true High Priest, whose type was Melchizedek?[55] Did he say of this

[51] Leg. All., ii, 2. [52] Prof., 20. [53] Conf. Ling., 28.
[54] Frag. Mangey, ii, 625. [55] Leg. All., iii, 25–6.

Logos that he was the great High Priest, the Intercessor, free from participation in all unrighteous deeds, of parents immortal and most pure (that is, of more than earthly origin), his Father, God, and his mother, Wisdom? The whole body of our epistle, chapters 5-10, is an elaborate exposition of the real high priesthood of the Christ. He is the great High Priest (4. 14), the Intercessor, "he ever liveth to make intercession for them" who draw near to God through him (7. 25), free from participation in all unrighteous deeds, "holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners" (7. 26), "named of God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek" (5. 10), who was "without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God" (7. 3).

With this apparently unhesitating appropriation of Philo's description of the Logos, do we find no mention of the Logos himself, and no personification of the Logos and his powers, such as that in which Philo so freely and persistently indulged? We hardly dare answer in the negative, for we have so near an approach to Philo's usage in Heb. 4. 12. Perhaps of all the many titles given to the Logos in any or all of Philo's works, the very strangest and the one which strikes us as the most unexpected and peculiar is that which he uses in the discussion of the Logos as the rational nature, to illustrate its keen and piercing quality, when he calls it Ὁ Τομέυς, The Cutter;[56] and remarkably enough it is a suggestion of this title which meets us in the single instance of a half personification of the Logos in Heb. 4. 12.

The passage reads: "For [God's Logos, ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ,] the Word of God is living, and active, and sharper [τομώτερος] than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow,

[56] Quis rer. div. haer., 26.

and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Having then a great high priest, who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession" (4. 12-14). This seems very close indeed to an ascription of the Logos title, with a suggestion of the old Philonian attributes, to Jesus the Son of God. If we could be sure that this was what the author meant, we would have in this passage the first illustration of the use of the Logos title in the writings of the New Testament; for the Epistle to the Hebrews is undoubtedly of earlier date than any of the Johannine books.

Carpzov, Siegfried, and others have collected the parallels between Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews. Bleek makes a list of twenty-two passages in which he notes resemblance between them. These parallel passages include: (1) Similar formulæ of quotation. We already have noticed that the phrases with which this epistle introduces quotations from the Old Testament never are found in the epistles of Paul, but we note now that they are found in the writings of Philo. (2) Similar forms of quotation, as in Heb. 13. 5, where the author of this epistle quotes certain words as from Scripture, although the exact form of them cannot be found anywhere in the Bible. However, the same quotation is to be found word for word in Philo. (3) The same use of Old Testament passages and narratives. They refer to the same Old Testament characters, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses; and they emphasize the same aspects in their lives. (4) The same conceptions of Old Testament usage and symbolism. (5) The same fundamental conception of the antithesis between the world of fleeting phenomena and the world of eternal realities. (6) The same Platonic notion of Ideas, as Divine Pre-existent Archetypes. Wernle has said, "From the theoretical point

of view the Christianity of the Epistle to the Hebrews is Platonic philosophy plus Christian Hope." To which Andrews adds, "The author of Hebrews was the first to see, to quote the phrase of Justin Martyr, that 'the Platonic dogmas are not foreign to Christianity,' but that Christ is the fulfillment not only of the religion of the Old Testament but of the Platonic philosophy as well."[57] (7) Numerous striking verbal affinities, as in the use of *δήπου* and *ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν*, and underlying thought affinity throughout.

Von Soden sums up his whole discussion of the dependence of the Epistle to the Hebrews upon Philo by saying, "It is beyond question that one cannot understand the Epistle to the Hebrews without Philo, and that its author before he was a Christian had been a disciple of the Alexandrian theologian, and that without doubt he had known Philo himself, and that as a Christian he had made the most of the ideas he had received from this master, so far as they appeared to him serviceable for the understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ."[58]

Dean Plumptre makes a study of the thoughts and words used in common by Philo and our author and says, "The result of the induction is a conviction amounting to little short of absolute certainty that the writer of the epistle was either personally a disciple of Philo, or that he had at one time of his life made his writings the object of such constant study that he had learned to speak, almost without knowing it, in the same dialect, and to think the same thoughts."[59] Whedon concludes that the epistle was written to save the Alexandrine class of Christians, and he says, "The whole epistle is one great effort to reconstruct Philonean Messianism into Christian Messianism."[60] In

[57] Expositor, Eighth Series, vol. xiv, p. 362.

[58] Von Soden, Hand-Commentar. Dritter Band. Zweite Abtheilung, p. 5. [59] Expositor, vol. i, p. 337.

[60] Whedon, Commentary on Hebrews, p. 42.

view of these facts, H. T. Andrews goes so far as to say, "If the author of Hebrews had not become a Christian, he might very possibly have become Philo's successor at Alexandria."[61] Schwegler, Köstlin, Delitzsch, Hilgenfeld, Pfleiderer, Immer, Holtzmann, Jülicher, and others agree with these authorities in affirming the dependence of the Epistle to the Hebrews upon Philo; and as soon as this is recognized we have in this one fact a broad line of distinction between this epistle and all the epistles of Paul. This affiliation with Alexandrianism marks a different authorship.

As soon as the Alexandrian affinities of this epistle have been established the modern mind is apt to discount the value of the argument in the epistle because it is founded upon the allegorical method of interpretation characteristic of Philo and the Alexandrian school and that method has been generally discredited among scientific interpreters today. This general attitude toward the epistle has been voiced by a recent writer as follows: "The form of the argument may be described as either rabbinical or Alexandrian. The writer, after laying down his proposition, proceeds to prove it by quotations from the Old Testament, taken out of their context and historical connection, adapted and even changed to suit his present purpose. This practice was common to Palestinian and Alexandrian writers; as was also the use of allegory, which plays a large part in Hebrews. But the writer's allegorical method differs from that of the rabbis in that it is like Philo's, part of a conscious philosophy, according to which the whole of the past and present history of the world is only a shadow of the true realities which are laid up in heaven. His interest in historical facts, in Old Testament writers, in Jewish institutions and even in the historical life of Jesus, is quite subordinate to his prepossession with the eternal and heavenly realities

[61] Expositor, Eighth Series, vol. xiv, p. 350.

which they, in more or less shadowy fashion, represent."[62] This is the commonly held opinion of the epistle and it would be quite a serious indictment of the validity of its argument if it were strictly true.

However, a still more recent writer suggests that some of these statements may be qualified to a certain extent. He says, "In striking contrast to the allegorical method of Philo, and to Paul's custom of adopting Old Testament phrases to express ideas different from those of the original writer, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews is true to the historical method of interpretation, and uses Old Testament passages in the exact sense which the first writer himself put upon them. This is true even of the chapter dealing with Melchizedek, where the epistle seems to approximate most closely to the Philonic method of exegesis. Melchizedek remains the priest-king of Salem. He is not a mere symbol, still less is he identical with Christ." And again, the author of this epistle "realizes the true method of historical interpretation: a passage of Scripture must be explained in the light of its context; its real meaning is that which its writer intended it to bear. These are the principles which lie at the root of all sound biblical criticism."[63]

Then it may be true that the epistle has Alexandrian affinities and yet is free from some at least of the Alexandrian faults. It may have taken the best while it rejected the worst of its features. The disciple may have improved upon his master, while an acknowledged disciple still. At any rate, in both his discipleship and his improvements he may be distinguished clearly from the apostle Paul.

8. Ignorance of Temple Ritual. There is apparent lack of acquaintance with the temple ritual. Paul had resided in Jerusalem for years and must have been acquainted with all

[62] T. Rees, International Standard Bible Encyclopædia, p. 1361.

[63] F. S. Marsh, in Dictionary of the Apostolic Church, vol. i, pp. 540, 542.

the details of the temple ritual from personal observation. The descriptions of the ritual service in this epistle are drawn entirely from the Old Testament description of the appointments in the tabernacle. The temple of this epistle is not the temple at Jerusalem but the tabernacle of the Pentateuch. There are certain inaccuracies of statement in the epistle which can be easily explained if the author was dependent for all of his knowledge upon what he could read in the sacred books; but they are such inaccuracies as Paul or anyone who had been present in the actual temple worship of that day never would have made.

9. **Second Generation of Believers.** The author of this epistle does not call himself an apostle and makes no claim to apostolic authority in any portion of his writing. On the contrary, in one passage he expressly includes himself among the second generation of believers, those who had not themselves seen or heard the Lord but to whom the words of the Lord had been handed down by those who had received them. This position of dependence upon tradition is strenuously repudiated by Paul. He always insisted that he had become an apostle, second in authority to none, and that his knowledge of the truth had come to him not from man, neither by man, but by direct revelation from Jesus Christ and God the Father.

Rendall says, "The contradiction between the letter and the spirit of the two statements found in Gal. 1. 1 and Heb. 2. 3 is so palpable as almost to exclude the possibility of reconciling them as proceeding from the same pen."[64] Professor Gardiner, after quoting Heb. 2. 3, declares, "Paul everywhere lays such emphasis on the fact that his presentation of Christian truth was in no way whatever derived from man, but was from express divine instruction given to himself personally, that this passage must form a presump-

[64] Rendall, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

tion against the Pauline authorship so strong as to be set aside only by clear and positive evidence."[65] Then he goes on to show that there is no such evidence, either from external or internal sources. Mentioning the same statement found in Heb. 2. 3, Philip Schaff says, "This passage alone is conclusive and decided Luther, Calvin, and Beza against the Pauline authorship."[66]

We now have given nine reasons for concluding against the Pauline authorship. Of course all of these are not of equal weight. (1) There might be some good reason, unknown to us, why the apostle Paul would use a new method of argument and a new disposition of his material, and why he might choose to omit his usual salutation and thanksgiving, and why he made use of a new form of the Greek text. No one of these facts, if they stood alone, would seem sufficient to rule out the possibility at least of the Pauline authorship.

(2) It seems very difficult to believe, however, that there could be any possible reason for Paul to change his connecting particles or his formulæ of Old Testament citations in this one epistle. On the supposition of the Pauline authorship it seems equally difficult to explain Paul's apparent ignorance of the temple appointments and ritual. These differences from the Pauline epistles seem to throw the weight of probability against authorship by Paul.

(3) To many scholars the single passage, Heb. 2. 3, seems decisive of the whole matter. The difference in style has been the chief objection to the Pauline authorship from ancient times. The affiliation with Alexandrinism has been increasingly recognized in modern times. Any of these three reasons would seem to be fatal to any assertion of Paul's authorship, and when we add to all three of them the considerations which already had thrown the weight of prob-

[65] Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series, vol. xiv, p. 343.

[66] Schaff, *op. cit.*, p. 820.

ability against the Pauline authorship, and then remember that there are still other differences which, if not conclusive in themselves, become so in connection with these more radical and decisive arguments, the sum total of the reasons thus accumulated against the Pauline authorship has been sufficient to convince modern scholarship that we must add a new author to the New Testament list of writers when we admit the Epistle to the Hebrews into our canon. Wordsworth and Lewin still think that the style of the epistle is that of Paul, but Ramsay says that their opinions are "examples of the remarkable truth that there is no view about the books of the Bible so paradoxical as not to find some good scholar for its champion."[67]

VI. Relation to Paul and the Pauline Theology

Bruce declares that the writer of Hebrews was not only not Paul, but he was not even a disciple of Paul. We cannot agree with this conclusion, for the following reasons: 1. In 13. 23 we read, "Know ye that our brother Timothy hath been set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you." This passage is sufficient to show that the author was a friend to Timothy, and Timothy belonged to the Pauline circle; and any friend to Timothy in all probability also was a friend to Paul. 2. In Heb. 10. 30 there is a quotation, "Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense," probably intended to reproduce Deut. 32. 35. It is found word for word in Rom. 12. 19, though neither in Romans nor in Hebrews is it an exact quotation from the Septuagint. 3. There are parallelisms of language and thought between this epistle and some of those of Paul. Compare Heb. 2. 14 with 1 Cor. 15. 26 and Heb. 2. 8 with 1 Cor. 15. 27. Of course these coincidences may be accidental. Bruce thinks rightly that it is easier to show acquaint-

[67] Expositor, Fifth Series, vol. ix, p. 409.

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ance with Philo's writings than with the writings of Paul. However, these parallels in quotation and in thought may show that the writer of Hebrews had read the epistles of Paul to the Romans and to the Corinthians at least. 4. The doctrine of the Epistle to the Hebrews is fundamentally at one with the doctrine of Paul. Bruce allows that while the author was not a personal follower of Paul he was in thorough sympathy with all the leading positions of Paulinism. He believes as fully as Paul in the providence and purpose of God manifest in all the history of Israel, in redemption through the life and death of Jesus, and in the present and eternal sovereignty of the exalted Lord. These things, the certain comradeship with Timothy, the few parallels with Pauline expressions, and the thorough-going sympathy with the Pauline spirit and theology, seem to us sufficient to show that our author was a Paulinist at heart, and we see no reason for deciding that he may not have belonged to Paul's personal company.

However, he was an independent spirit; and this epistle, as Pfleiderer says, is "a thoroughly original attempt to establish the main results of Paulinism upon new presuppositions and in an entirely independent way."[68] Delitzsch declares, "The form of the epistle is not Pauline, and the thoughts, though never un-Pauline, yet often go beyond the Pauline type of doctrine, . . . and even where this is not the case they seem to be peculiarly placed and applied."[69] This independence over against Paulinism is observable at several points.

1. The destination of the epistle naturally leads the author to ignore the Gentiles from beginning to end. He doubtless believed with Paul in the universal destination of the gospel, but there is no suggestion of it anywhere in this epistle. The seed of Abraham is addressed throughout, and the hori-

[68] Pfleiderer, Paulinism II, 53.

[69] Com., vol. i, p. 4.

zon of the epistle is limited to the Hebrew race. Had the apostle to the Gentiles himself written this Epistle to the Hebrews, he surely would have slipped in somewhere or other an apology for his mission to them and some suggestion of the wider fellowship into which the Jew had been ushered by the universal efficacy of the atoning death of Christ, and into which the Gentile now had entered.

2. Paul said some very harsh things about the law. He declared that sin and death came through it, and the Christian had been redeemed from the yoke of the law. He thought the law was incidental and subordinate, and in his writings he set it in opposition to the free grace of Christ. By the law men were condemned to die; they were to be saved only through faith in the gospel provision of grace. The writer of this epistle does not look at the law in this light. He has no wounding word to speak against it. It is an essential part of God's economy, and it simply is transfigured to higher potencies under the Christian regime. Paul's conception of the law always aroused the antagonism of the Jews, and they hated him and his doctrine. The conception of this epistle would have flattered rather than angered them. To the author of this epistle the law was as sacred as it could be to any Jew in the land.

3. In Paul's epistles the emphasis is laid upon the sacrifice of the Christ. In this epistle the emphasis is on the sacrificial ministry of Christ. The theology is the same, but the point of view is different. Paul sees the victim; the author of this epistle sees the priest. It is the conception of the heavenly priesthood of Christ which fills this epistle, while it never is mentioned anywhere in the epistles of Paul. The notion seems to be foreign to his thought.

4. "To Paul, the contrast between Judaism and Christianity was a contrast between Sin and Mercy, between Curse and Blessing, between Slavery and Freedom; but to this writer it is a contrast almost exclusively between Type and

Antitype, between outline and image, between shadow and substance, between indication and reality."[70]

5. The characteristic key-words of the Pauline theology occur in this epistle but with new connotations. "Faith" is a "grasp of unseen reality" and "righteousness" is simply ethical righteousness here.

6. In one respect at least the author seems to have advanced beyond the teaching and practice of Paul. Paul maintained the freedom of the Gentiles from all bondage to the Jewish ordinances, but he himself zealously observed all of them; and he testified to every man who received circumcision that he was a debtor to do the whole law.[71] He never thought of asking his Jewish brethren to abandon the Mosaic system of worship. He was accused of having spoken against the temple and circumcision and the customs of the Jews, but he repudiated the charge. He took pains to prove that there was no truth in the things reported concerning him, and that he walked orderly, keeping the law.[72]

On the other hand, the contention of this epistle is that the whole Levitical dispensation with all of its ordinances and its worship was nigh unto vanishing away. It had been made obsolete by the life and death and ministry of Jesus. It had been removed from this earth and transferred to the heavenly sanctuary, where it was more efficacious than ever before. It had been authoritative in the past, but now it belonged to the past alone as far as any obligation to observe it in forms and ceremonies was concerned. The Christian Jew was emancipated from it as fully as any Gentile ever had been.

This was not the Pauline attitude. It was more radical and more liberal than Paul himself ever became. Before the logic of facts had rendered the temple worship in Jerusalem impossible, this epistle had proved that there was no

[70] Cambridge Greek Testament, Hebrews, p. xxii.

[71] Gal. 5. 3. [72] Acts 21. 21, 24.

reasonable ground for its continuance among the disciples of Christ. It must have been of great help to the whole Jewish-Christian Church in accepting the inevitable when it came and in seeing that when the Jewish ritual had vanished from the earth, never to be restored again, their Christian faith was not destroyed and the enjoyment of all the privileges of their Christian religion was in no degree injured or lessened. On the basis laid down in the Epistle to the Hebrews Jewish Christianity could swing clear of the old ritual and rejoice in the consciousness that it had lost nothing in the disappearance of this ritual from among men, while it had gained everything for which the old worship had stood by the acceptance of the highpriesthood of Christ. Paul was the great radical of the church as far as the Gentiles were concerned. The writer of this epistle is more radical than Paul in his conception of the liberty which the gospel inevitably and consistently must bring to the Jews. He was Pauline in spirit, independent in thought, and more advanced than any other writer in the New Testament in the teaching of the emancipation of the Jews in and through the gospel of Christ.

VII. Who is the Author?

Are we able to determine the author of the epistle? Zahn is altogether right in declaring that "there is no tradition regarding the author of Hebrews which compares with the traditions regarding the authors of the other New Testament writings in age, unanimity, and an originality hard to invent."[73] Under these circumstances the way is open for suggestions of any more or less plausible sort, and there are authorities to be quoted and some reasons to be given for almost every possible name in the early church. We will make a partial list of these.

[73] Zahn, *op. cit.*, p. 305.

1. There always have been those who held to the authorship by Paul. We have decided against it, but we recall that the early Eastern church practically was unanimous in its testimony that Paul wrote the epistle; and Jerome and Augustine and Chrysostom were disposed to accept its authority in this matter, and the tradition of the Pauline authorship was maintained in the whole church from their time down to the days of the Reformation. Among still later scholars who have held to the old view we may mention Owen, Mill, Carpzov, Bengel, Cramer, Hug, Heigl, Storr, Moses Stuart, Wordsworth, McCaul, Forster, Paulus, Olshausen, Saphir, Biesenthal, Kay, Holtzheuer, Angus, Hofmann, and Whedon.

2. Clement of Rome. This is the answer given by Erasmus, and by some of the Roman Catholic commentators, such as Reithmaier and Bisping; but we have an epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, and the style of this acknowledged work is decidedly different and much inferior to that of the Epistle to the Hebrews. We learn from it that Clement had neither the originality in thought nor the classical excellence of expression which characterizes this epistle. Clement knew the Epistle to the Hebrews and admired it very much and imitated it somewhat; but he is only a copyist and not an original genius as the author of Hebrews was.

3. Aquila. He was suggested by Bleek and Alford as a possibility; but the only reason for thinking of him is that he was a Jew and a companion of Paul.

4. Silas. Mynster, Boehme, and Godet seem to favor this suggestion. Like Aquila, he was a Jew and a companion of Paul; but there were so many of whom these things could be said, and surely there ought to be some further reason for deciding upon any one authorship before we feel free to rule out all competitors for that honor. Silas was no Alexandrian, and it is doubtful if he could be assigned to the second generation of believers or to second rank in the

church. In Acts 15. 22 he is said to be of the company of the apostles and the elders.

5. Titus. Titus was an able man, but we have no positive evidence for his authorship.

6. Mark. Lowndes champions his authorship, but here, again, we have other composition with which to compare the epistle, and surely the style of Hebrews is not the style of the Gospel according to Mark.

7. Luke. So thought Clement of Alexandria, Calvin, Grotius, Crell, Lewis, Eager, Field, Delitzsch, Stier, Ebrard, Döllinger, and Alexander. The same objection holds here. The style of the epistle is not the style of the third Gospel. Luke does not have the oratorical temperament of this writer. He probably was a Gentile, and he was no Alexandrian.

8. Zenas, the lawyer. As a professional man and a companion of Paul we might suppose him to have been capable of writing this epistle.

9. Linus. He was the man to whom, according to tradition, the apostles committed the government of the church at Rome, and he is claimed as the first post-apostolic pope. Here, again, we have an able man, and we are free to suppose that he could have written this epistle. These two suggestions, Zenas and Linus, are offered by W. H. Simcox as possibilities; but evidently they never can be more than that.

10. Peter has been proposed as the author of this epistle on the ground of certain resemblances of conceptions and phraseology in Hebrews and the First Epistle of Peter. Welch, the protagonist of this opinion, thinks that by ascribing the Epistle to the Hebrews to Peter we give the apostle to the circumcision something like his due prominence in the literature of the early church alongside the apostle Paul. The contention does not compel much consideration among modern scholars.

11. Aristion is supposed to have written the closing verses of our Gospel according to Mark, and he has been proposed as the possible author of the Epistle to the Hebrews by Chapman[74] and Perdelwitz.

12. Philip the Deacon, "a Pauline before Paul," was very tentatively conjectured by W. M. Ramsay[75] as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and E. L. Hicks has championed the suggestion most vigorously since.[76] Ramsay seems to have found the suggestion first in a series of papers by the Rev. W. M. Lewis.[77] These men conclude that the epistle was written at Cæsarea during Paul's imprisonment there. Philip, resident in Cæsarea at that time and in constant intercourse with Paul and as the official representative of the church at Cæsarea, writes to the church at Jerusalem to save the wavering and to reconcile the Jewish and Pauline elements in it. He with Stephen represented the more liberal element in the mother church at Jerusalem and after Stephen's martyrdom he had carried the gospel message into Samaria and later had baptized an Ethiopian eunuch and then had evangelized all the cities from Azotus to Cæsarea.

He was an original and venturesome spirit, a Hellenist associated later with Timothy and Paul. He was a Jew, acquainted with the Hebrew tongue and at home in the Hebrew Scriptures. It may be possible that he wrote the epistle; but the writing of any Cæsarean epistles by Paul is very doubtful, and the writing of this epistle at Cæsarea is supported upon the same doubtful grounds. It would be more difficult to account for the sense of imminent catastrophe which pervades the epistle if it were dated from

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[74] Revue Bénédictine, 1905, vol. xxii, p. 50.

[75] Expositor, Fifth Series, vol. ix, pp. 401–422.

[76] The Interpreter, vol. v, pp. 245–265.

[77] The Thinker, October and November, 1893, and The Biblical World, August, 1898, and April, 1899.

A. D. 53-57 on the supposition of its authorship by Philip, and Philip probably was a personal disciple of Jesus and would not have written Heb. 2. 3.

13. Harnack made a sensation a few years ago[78] by declaring his belief that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written largely by a woman, and that woman Priscilla. It would be interesting if it could be proved that a woman's hand had a share in the writing of the New Testament; but it is doubtful if this suggestion by Harnack will command the allegiance of many Biblical scholars, even when Aquila's name is joined with that of Priscilla as co-author. J. H. Moulton, Schiele, Peake, and Rendel Harris seem attracted by it. Harnack gives as his reasons for making this suggestion: (1) Priscilla was a very intellectual woman, and evidently of great influence in the early Christian Church. (2) She was a friend of Paul and of Timothy; and Paul addresses her as his "coworker." (3) She belonged to the second or outer circle of believers, not to the personal disciples of the Lord. (4) Such passages as 4. 1 and 10. 32 and 10. 24, 25 would be appropriate from Priscilla to the close circle of Christian friends meeting in her house. These are rather precarious grounds for any sure conclusion and we are disposed to doubt whether either Priscilla or her husband had sufficient culture to compose this epistle, and we are disposed to question whether any woman in the Pauline circle would either have assumed or have been granted such a position of authority in the church as the author of this epistle held.

14. Barnabas. This is a more likely suggestion. At least better reasons can be given for holding it. (1) Barnabas was a Jew and in perfect sympathy and in the best of standing with his race. He seems to have been a man of considerable wealth, and that probably insured his liberal edu-

[78] Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, 1900.

cation. We know that he was an exceptionally broad-minded man, a man of liberal views and wide sympathies. (2) Barnabas was a Levite, and therefore because of his professional duties would be especially interested in the whole of the temple ritual. The argument of the main portion of this epistle has to do with the forms of the temple worship. It is such an argument as a Christian Levite would be most likely to make. The only occurrence of the word "Levitical," *Λευειτικός*, in the New Testament is in Heb. 7. 11, and the only New Testament references to the Old Testament Levi as an individual are in Heb. 7. 5, 9. Barnabas, the Levite, would be as likely as any one to be interested in Levi and the Levitical priesthood.

(3.) Barnabas would be familiar with the Psalms. It was a part of the duty of the Levites to chant the Psalms in the temple courts. Nearly half of the quotations from the Old Testament in the Epistle to the Hebrews are taken from the Psalms. The relative proportion of these quotations is four times as great as in the writings of Paul, and eight times as great as in the writings of Luke or any other writer in the New Testament. (4) Barnabas was a Hellenist Jew and a native of Cyprus. As such he might be expected to be able to write good Greek and also to be acquainted with the writings of Philo, since Cyprus was on the direct line of communication with Alexandria. (5) He was a companion of Paul, yet, as probably the older man and surely as the older Christian, he might be expected to be more or less independent of Paul in his theology, as we know that he was in his action.[79]

(6) Barnabas is called an apostle,[80] and evidently was held in such high repute that the writing of this epistle would not have seemed incongruous in him. He seems to have been the most influential Hellenistic Christian in the

[79] Gal. 2. 13, 14; Acts 15. 39. [80] Acts 14. 14.

early church; and he was delegated to superintend the Christian work in Antioch just as Peter and John were sent down to look after things in Samaria. It was apostolic supervision in both cases. We speak of the apostle to the Gentiles, Paul; but Paul spoke of the apostles to the Gentiles, including Barnabas with himself, "James and Cephas and John, . . . gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles" (Gal. 2. 9). As an apostle, ranking with James and Peter and John and Paul in the esteem of the early church, he could and would address the church with all the authority assumed by the author of this epistle.

(7) Barnabas was called a son of consolation, or of exhortation,[81] and it has been suggested that he has affixed his signature to this epistle when he wrote in 13. 22, "But I exhort you, brethren, bear with the word of exhortation." We are told that he was reminding them there of the name which they themselves had given him. (8) A spurious Epistle of Barnabas is extant. Its existence, it has been urged, bears witness to the fact that a genuine epistle was known to have come from his pen and, since it had been lost to sight, this one had been written to take its place. It was the lot of Barnabas that his reputation should decrease while that of Paul should increase. It would be in line with that lot in other respects if Barnabas should have written an epistle which later years perversely came to ascribe to Paul. (9) There is the positive testimony of Tertullian, who said, "There exists also a writing entitled to the Hebrews, by Barnabas."[82] Novatian, in the third century, quotes Heb. 13. 15 as from the writings of the holy Barnabas.[83] Aside from the mention of Paul and the suggestion of Luke as

[81] Acts 4. 36. [82] De Pudicitia, xx.

[83] Tractatus Origenis de libris S. Scripturarum, Heb. 13. 15, quoted as from "sanctissimus Barnabas." Cf. Zahn, Introduction, vol. ii, p. 310.

the translator of Paul, these are the only testimonies concerning authorship which we can quote from the church Fathers.

This seems like a comparatively strong case; and it commands the suffrages of most excellent authorities, such as Blass, Cameron, Hefele, Schmidt, Twesten, Ullmann, Wieseler, Maier, Grau, Heinrici, Thiersch, Renan, Volkmar, Overbeck, Ritschl, Schultz, Kübel, Keil, Zahn, Weiss, Walker, Salmon, McClymont, McGiffert, Milligan, Gardiner, Goodspeed, Gregory, Bartlet, Barth, and Adeney. The following objections seem to us to be fatal to this hypothesis: (1) Barnabas would not have reckoned himself in the second generation of believers. (2) He would not have been likely to make the mistakes in the description of the temple and its service which are found in this epistle. (3) He was too well known in the church for his name to have been lost. If it became attached to another spurious and much inferior epistle, why should it not have remained attached to this more worthy effort?

15. Apollos. All that we know of Apollos we learn from the description given of him in Acts 18. 24-28 and in the references made to him by Paul in 1 Cor. 1. 12; 3. 4-6, 22; 4. 6; 16. 12; and in Tit. 3. 13. Apollos came to Ephesus about 55 A. D., and there was instructed by Aquila and Priscilla in the Christian faith and the Pauline theology. He was sent to Corinth later and was a mighty preacher of the new truth. Many think that this is the only name in the New Testament which all the facts in the epistle seem to suit. They claim that all the conditions of the problem are satisfied in him.

They say: (1) He was a Jew, and this epistle must have been written by a Jew. (2) He was a Hellenist Jew, and probably was unacquainted with the ritual worship at Jerusalem. At least we do not know that he ever was in the city of Jerusalem. (3) He was an Alexandrian Jew, the only one

who is expressly stated to be such in our New Testament. This accounts for his using the Codex Alexandrinus, and for his acquaintance with the writings of Philo and the other Alexandrian books. (4) We are expressly told that he was learned in the Scriptures. The author of this epistle is at home in all the sacred Book. (5) We also are told that he was an eloquent man, an attractive orator, and a powerful reasoner, and that he convinced the Jews to whom he talked out of their own Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. This scriptural argument, most effective when addressed to Jews, and the oratorical putting of it are in evidence in this epistle. (6) Apollos belonged to the second generation of believers, and first heard of the Christ through tradition. (7) He was acquainted with Paul, and a friend of Timothy. (8) At Corinth, he was recognized as an independent authority, together with Peter and Paul. (9) We learn that he was capable of boldness of tone (Acts 18. 26), and also of modest self-suppression (1 Cor. 16. 12).

Farrar says, "Had Paul and Luke deliberately designed to point out a man capable of writing the Epistle to the Hebrews, they could not have chosen any words more suitable to such an object than those by which they actually describe" Apollos.[84] This is the opinion of Luther, Clericus, Müller, Ziegler, Rothe, Riehm, Bunsen, Schott, Semler, Bleek, Tholuck, Credner, Reuss, Lange, De Wette, De Pressensé, Norton, Alford, Farrar, Selwyn, Plumptre, Moulton, Scholten, Hilgenfeld, Guericke, Feilmoser, Osiander, Heumann, Dindorf, Lütterbeck, Belser, Schulze, Klostermann, Kurtz, Pfleiderer, Lünemann. Lünemann is so confident that he speaks of this hypothesis as "the only correct one." Resch has suggested: "Paul laid the foundation; the author of Hebrews built on it, not with wood or hay or stubble, but with gold, silver, precious stones. Should it have been

[84] Farrar, Early Days of Christianity, p. 217.

Apollos to whom we owe this epistle, then would that saying be true: Paul planted, Apollos watered."[85]

The chief objections to this suggestion are: (1) Luther was the first man ever to affirm it, as far as we know. In 1522 Luther said that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews was unknown, while he was sure that Paul could not have written certain passages in it. Later he expressed himself more doubtfully concerning the author, "quisquis est, sive Paulus sive, ut ego arbitror, Apollo." Later still, in 1537, he speaks more decisively, "This Apollos was a man of great intelligence. The Epistle to the Hebrews is indeed his."[86] There is no hint of the authorship by Apollos to be found in all antiquity. If Apollos had written the epistle, surely some one would have known it in the beginning and have recorded the fact, or the tradition would have been preserved in some quarter and some mention would have been made of it by some one before the time of Martin Luther. (2) Apollos learned the gospel from Aquila and Priscilla, and not, like the author of this epistle, from those who had heard the Lord. (3) Apollos seems to have been of about the same age with Paul and the first generation of believers. The writer of this epistle ranks himself in the second generation of believers and is more likely to have been of the age of Timothy. (4) If the epistle is addressed to the Hebrews either of Jerusalem or of Palestine, what reason have we to think that Apollos ever had had any dealings with them or would assume any authority in addressing them or would ask them to pray that he might be restored to them, since he never had belonged to them in any way?

These may not seem very conclusive objections, but they serve to raise some serious questionings in our mind. Apollos would seem to be the most likely author of any

[85] Resch, Paulinismus, S. 506.

[86] Luther, Werke, Bd. xviii, S. 181.

whose name occurs in the New Testament. Barnabas would come next in the order of probability. However, objections can be made to both these men; and we cannot therefore be at all certain of either of them. There is but one other conclusion left for us.

16. The author is unknown and in all probability always will remain so. This is the opinion of Eichhorn, Seyffarth, Neudecker, Baumgarten-Crusius, Grimm, Kluge, Lipsius, Ewald, Baur, Von Soden, Holtzmann, Hausrath, Köstlin, Jülicher, Moll, Weizsäcker, Ménégoz, Moffatt, Rendall, Dods, W. R. Smith, Schaff, Westcott, Vaughan, Davidson, and Bruce. McGiffert concludes: "Since there are no personal references which can furnish a clue to the identity of the author, we shall do well to content ourselves with a *non liquet*."[87]

Of some things concerning the author we feel sure. (1) He was a Jew and a Hellenist Jew. (2) He was neither resident in Palestine nor acquainted with the actual ritual worship in the temple. (3) He knew his Greek Bible thoroughly, but probably was not familiar with the Hebrew original. (4) He had read the Alexandrian Jewish books, and may have lived in Alexandria and may have been a pupil of Philo. (5) He was a friend of Timothy and was in sympathy with the Pauline type of theology. (6) He was a man with the oratorical temperament, capable of independent thinking, and more radical in his conclusions as to the future of Judaism and of Christianity than even Paul himself. (7) He was a Christian prophet, speaking with the authority of Divine truth. The ages have vindicated every prediction he made and substantiated his every statement of fact.

He is The Great Unknown of the New Testament. His epistle ranks with the best in the book. It is worthy of

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[87] McGiffert, The Apostolic Age, p. 481.

Paul or John or Peter or James. It has characteristics, however, which seem to make it impossible for any of these men to have written it. We have another hand of genius and heart of flame in this author. As Thiersch has said: "If it should be found that a noble picture, which had been attributed to Raphael, was not by that artist, there would not be one masterpiece the less, but one great master the more."

There is a sense of disappointment in deciding that the author of so great an epistle must remain for us anonymous. We would like to acknowledge our indebtedness to him and put the laurel wreath of our gratitude and appreciation upon his brow; but it is the one exhortation of his epistle that we look away from all other inferior and human helpers to Jesus, the all-mighty to save. If we knew his name, he would beg of us to give all our praise and our gratitude to Him who had inherited the more excellent name, Jesus the all-sufficient Source of salvation and strength. His name is hidden from us, that we may give all honor to the Master for the glory of whose name alone he wrote.

It is one of the traditions of New England history that during King Philip's War, at Hadley in the Connecticut valley, on the first day of September, 1675, the inhabitants were all gathered in the church and were celebrating a fast when the war-whoops of the Indians resounded on every side and the service broke up in confusion. The settlers sallied forth to the defense of their homes, but the enemy seemed to be stronger than they and a panic soon ensued. Then a stranger of venerable aspect with long and flowing beard suddenly appeared in their midst. He spoke with authority and rallied their forces and charged the foe and put him to flight. When the settlers returned from the pursuit the stranger had disappeared. They did not know whence he came or whither he had gone; and some said that an angel had been sent from God for their deliverance.

It must have been in some such way that the Epistle to the Hebrews first made its appearance in the Hebrew Church. It was a time of panic and discouragement and fear. Some thought the battle was going against the Christians and to some it seemed that the day already was lost. Suddenly this epistle appeared in their midst. It spoke with authority, and their forces were rallied and their courage revived. The battle was renewed and the banner of the cross was carried to victory.

The parallel is even more striking in our day. They knew whence this lordly messenger came. We do not. Neither do we know whither he has gone. He is to us a mysterious stranger, a Melchizedek, without father, without mother, without posterity. His words are as the words of an angel sent directly from heaven for our deliverance. Our eyes are holden that we may not see his face; but we hear his voice and are glad.

We have not finished with the mysteries connected with the origin of this epistle. We do not know who wrote it, and we do not know to whom it was written.

VIII. To Whom Was the Epistle Written?

As many answers have been made to this question as to the question of authorship. There seems to be the same degree of uncertainty among the various scholars upon both points. We list some of their suggestions and add the names of the authorities adhering to each: 1. The churches of Asia Minor. Bengel, Cramer, Jacobus, Schmidt. 2. The churches of Galatia. Storr and Münster. 3. The church at Laodicea. Stein. 4. The church at Ephesus. Röth. 5. The church in Lycaonia. Credner. 6. The Jewish Christians of the Pauline field. Wall, Woll. 7. The Jewish Christians of Macedonia. Noesselt, Semler. 8. The church at Corinth. Weber, Mack. 9. The church at Antioch. Böhme, Hofmann, Rendall. 10. The church in Cyprus. Walker. 11. The

churches in Spain. Nicholas de Lyra, Ludwig. 12. The church at Alexandria. Ullmann, Wieseler, Köstlin, Bunsen, Hilgenfeld, Schneckenburger, Schleiermacher, Volkmar, Ritschl, Reuss, Conybeare and Howson, Plumptre, Davidson. 13. The church at Rome. Wetstein, Eichhorn, Schulz, Baur, Holtzmann, Kurtz, Schenkel, Renan, Réville, Mangold, Zahn, Von Soden, Pfleiderer, Jülicher, Harnack, Alford, Milligan, Moffatt, Goodspeed, Peake. 14. There has been a tendency among some recent writers to set aside the tradition that the epistle was written to the Hebrews, and to hold that it was written to Gentiles. Schürer, Jülicher, Weizsäcker, Pfleiderer, Von Soden, McGiffert, and Bacon represent this view. The whole theory is, as Westcott says, nothing more than "an ingenious paradox."[88] Ramsay agrees, "It would be difficult to find an opinion so clearly paradoxical, so obviously opposed to the whole weight of evidence, so entirely founded on strained misinterpretation of a few passages and on the ignoring of the general character of the document."[89] 15. Euthalius said that the epistle was written to all believing Jews. Baumgarten, Heinrichs, Schwegler agree. Reuss thinks that we have here not so much a letter as a theological treatise intended for the whole church. That the epistle is not primarily an encyclical is apparent, however, from more than one passage in which some particular body of believers is definitely addressed. In 5. 11, 12 the author rebukes them for their slow progress in spiritual things. He thinks they ought to know more than they do, having been converted as long as they have. In 10. 34 he praises them for their brotherly behavior in the past and the spirit of self-sacrifice they had maintained. In 12. 4 he declares that there have been no martyrs among them as yet. In 13. 7 he mentions the fact that some of their leaders had died. He evidently is well acquainted with their

[88] Westcott, Commentary on Hebrews, p. xxxv.

[89] Expositor, Fifth Series, vol. ix, p. 405.

circumstances and with their spiritual condition. In 13. 23 he promises to visit them soon. Therefore we decide that the epistle must have been written to some particular church or closely related group of churches. The author addresses, not all Hebrews, but the Hebrews in some particular place.

16. The traditional destination of the epistle has been the church at Jerusalem or this church with the nearly related churches of Judæa or Palestine. The reasons advanced for this conclusion are as follows: (1) The Gentiles are absolutely ignored in this epistle. We would judge from the epistle itself that there were Hebrews alone in the church to which it was addressed. If any considerable section of it had been composed of Gentiles, they surely would have been mentioned at some time in the course of the argument. Since all reference to them is omitted, the natural inference is that they were not in existence. Now, the church in Jerusalem, or the churches in the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem in Judæa or Palestine, were the only Christian churches in which there was an entirely Jewish membership. Anywhere else in the Christian world the Gentiles would be more or less in evidence. (2) The frequent and detailed references to the Jewish temple worship would be most appropriate and most readily appreciated at Jerusalem and in Palestine, for there that worship was best known and continually seen. (3) The exhortation to hospitality would be most appropriate at Jerusalem (13. 2). Every year the Jews came up from every part of the world to the celebration of the great feasts, and there must have been abundant opportunity for the exercise of hospitality on these occasions. No other church had anything like such opportunities. The poorest of the Christians as well as the poorest of the Jews in Jerusalem had multiplied occasions for generosity and hospitality and the cultivation of friendly relations with their brethren of all the lands. (4) The whole trend of the exhortation in this epistle seems most appropriate here. The danger

against which the author warns is the danger of discouragement in the Christian faith and consequent return to the Jewish worship. The Christians at Jerusalem had a twofold reason for disappointment. (*a*) They had hoped that their brethren would be converted and that all the Jews would join them in their adherence to the Christian faith. On the contrary, the large majority of their countrymen were becoming more and more antagonistic. They were farther than ever from the acceptance of Christianity and they regarded the Christians as renegades and apostates. It began to look as if the Jewish nation were hopelessly alienated from any possibility of evangelization. The Christians had prayed for the regeneration of all of their people, but now they began to despair of any such prospect in the immediate future. Then (*b*) they had hoped that Jesus would return to set up the kingdom in power. They had looked for him continually, but a whole generation had passed away and the Master did not come. They had begun to doubt whether he would come at all in their lifetime. They had hoped that he would redeem Israel, but now it looked as if Israel were drifting beyond all reasonable expectation of redemption. The clouds of God's wrath were gathering upon the horizon. A crisis was approaching, and the whole outlook seemed an utterly gloomy one. The temptation was to return to the consolation of their early faith. In Jerusalem there was all the fascination of the temple ritual to which they had been accustomed all their life and from which they seemed likely to be excommunicated by their fanatical countrymen. They missed these associations of their early days. They had adopted a new interpretation of Scripture. They had abandoned their old national hopes. They had no temple and no priesthood and no altars of their own. There was the constant temptation to go back to the popular side, to adopt again the old forms of worship, and to be satisfied with them even as their fathers had been. This

temptation was strongest where the Jews were in closest contact with the temple worship and the annual feasts. The Christian Church at Jerusalem, therefore, was in greatest need of the consolations and the exhortations of this epistle. (5) It is a strange fact that no one of the early Christian churches claims this epistle. It would be easier to explain the lack of such a claim at Jerusalem than anywhere else in the Christian world. We know that the city of Jerusalem was destroyed and that the Christian Church there was dispersed and it was not reorganized for some time. There was ample opportunity, therefore, for this epistle to be lost and for the tradition of its authorship to disappear. This would not be so likely to happen at Alexandria or Rome or Ephesus or any other church where the organization was continuous and the traditions were undisturbed through the generations.

For these reasons the following authorities hold the traditional view; Lünemann, Moll, Weiss, Godet, Grimm, Hug, De Wette, Ewald, Tholuck, Thiersch, Delitzsch, Bleek, Bisping, Bartlet, Keil, Riehm, Beyschlag, Salmon, Schott, Vaughan, Davidson, Westcott and Hort, Findlay, Bruce. Weiss says that this destination of the epistle is the only one possible.[90] Davidson says that this opinion was held by most of the Fathers; by the Alexandrian theologians, by Eusebius, Jerome, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact, and others.[91] Delitzsch says that it was the unanimous ancient opinion that the epistle was addressed to Judæa.[92]

The ancient Fathers ought to be as likely to know about the destination of the epistle as we or any modern critics. Yet we ask ourselves (1) whether any Hellenist Jew, unacquainted with the temple worship, would have ventured

[90] Weiss, Introduction, vol. ii, p. 29.
[91] Davidson, Introduction, vol. iii, p. 267.
[92] Delitzsch, Commentary, vol. i, p. 21.

to write to the church at Jerusalem about these things; and whether he could ask them to pray that he might be restored to them, if he were a Hellenist and an Alexandrian and never had belonged to their company; and (2) whether he could imply that there had been no martyrdoms among them, when Stephen and James the apostle and James the brother of the Lord had suffered martyrdom there; and (3) whether he could address them as those to whom the gospel had been preached by those who had heard the Lord when there must have been many among them who belonged to the first generation of believers and had received the gospel from the Lord's own mouth; and (4) whether the suggestion that they had suffered persecution and imprisonment but now were in the enjoyment of peace ever could have been applicable to the church at Jerusalem and in Judæa; and (5) whether the Palestinian churches would have any particular interest in Timothy or Timothy would be likely to hasten to them immediately after his release from imprisonment; and (6) whether the charge could be maintained against them that they had produced no teachers, when the first missionary preaching had gone out into all parts of the world from their cities; and (7) whether the saints in Judæa were not notorious rather for their poverty than for their hospitality, objects of charity rather than the purveyors of it.

These are all pertinent questionings, and they suffice to leave a doubt in our mind whether there can be any certainty as to the destination of the epistle. The whole Christian world of that day has been searched for a likely point of reception for an epistle of this sort; and the multitude of suggestions concerning it is sufficient to prove that none of them can furnish ground for any exclusive claim and therefore there can be no certainty in holding to any one of them. The mystery of authorship is equaled by the mystery of destination. To these two mysteries we now add a third. Where was this epistle written?

IX. Place of Writing?

The only clue we have for the answering of this question is to be found in that sentence in the epistle which reads, "They of Italy salute you" (13. 24). In keeping with all the other difficulties attending the questions of Introduction in connection with this epistle, this passage is capable of two interpretations. It may mean that the author was in Italy and sent greetings from the Christians living there to the Christians in Jerusalem or Alexandria or Ephesus, or whatever city or church outside of Italy he may have addressed. Or it may mean that the author was in Alexandria or Ephesus or Corinth or some city outside of Italy, and that he was writing to Rome or some city inside of Italy and so sent greetings from their compatriots resident with him, "The Italian colony in this place sends greetings home."

We think the former alternative the more probable. We think that Paul was dead and Peter was dead and Timothy had been in prison when this epistle was written. Its author was waiting in some city in Italy for Timothy to join him; and then the two would return together to some former field of labor where both were well known. In the meantime this epistle is sent ahead of them to be a consolation and a foretaste of their personal exhortations and preaching.

X. Time of Writing

There is a sufficient variety of opinion among the critics at this point also; but it seems to us that we can come nearer a sure conclusion here than at any point we have discussed thus far. 1. If the epistle shows that the author has read the Epistles to the Romans and to the Corinthians, then his own epistle must have been written later than these, later than A. D. 59. 2. The epistle was written after Timothy's imprisonment; and although we know nothing at all about

this, it seems probable that it was after Paul's martyrdom and the close of the history in the Book of Acts, after A. D. 64. 3. The epistle was written before the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem, A. D. 70. We come to this conclusion upon the basis of the statements made in the epistle itself. (1) The author says that Jesus, if he were upon the earth, would not be a priest, seeing there are those who offer the gifts according to the law (8. 4). He surely would not make such a statement unless the sacrifices were still going on. (2) The argument of 10. 1-4 depends upon the fact of the continual repetition of the sacrifices. They are ineffective, and therefore they have to be offered again and again. Any Christian writing after the destruction of Jerusalem would have said: "God himself has pronounced them ineffective by their abolishing. His providence has set them aside. They have now ceased to be offered; and you can no longer put your trust in them." (3) The appeal made in the eleventh chapter to faith in the unseen has double force if the sacrificial system was still in existence, and all the temple worship was visible and clamoring for their faithful observance, and they had an opportunity to return to it at any time and put their confidence in its historically established and continuously apparent ordinances of salvation. (4) The appeal of the last chapter gains greatly in significance if it is a last call to escape from the doomed City of Destruction to the only sure refuge without the walls. (5) The whole argument of the epistle becomes immeasurably pathetic if it is addressed to Jews at the very crisis of their national history when they were torn between the conflicting claims of their patriotism and their Christian faith. (6) The parallel in 3. 9 and 3. 17 suggests this date. The Israelites had seen the mighty works of God for forty years in the wilderness; and now the Hebrews had seen the mighty works of the new dispensation for forty years since the crucifixion and the resur-

rection and Pentecost. Let them beware, for the day of judgment was again at hand.

4. The epistle could not have been written long before the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the temple worship. For (1) some were becoming impatient at the long delay of the Lord's second coming (10. 36, 37). (2) Some were showing indications of weakness and tendencies to backsliding (12. 12). (3) The church had lived through a period of persecution, and there had been time for some of its leaders to have passed away (10. 32-34; 13. 7). (4) The fate of the city of Jerusalem seemed so uncertain that the author reminds them of the city that hath foundations and that abideth for evermore (11. 10; 13. 14). (5) The author prophesies that the old covenant and its ordinances are now nigh to vanishing away (8. 13).

We think, therefore, that the epistle was written some time in the six years between A. D. 64 and 70, and the following authorities would agree with this decision: Wieseler, Riehm, Godet, Kurtz, Keil, Kübel, Ewald, Scholten, Tholuck, Hilgenfeld, Lünemann, Clemen, Beyschlag, Barth, Bleek, Weiss, Renan, Grimm, Ménégoz, Milligan, Meyer, Ayles, Kay, Stuart, Davidson, Rendall, Roberts, Westcott, Vaughan, Farrar, Adeney, Findlay, Stevens, Sanday, Schaff. Others are disposed to put it at somewhat earlier date; as Salmon, Ramsay, Thiersch, Lardner, Lewis, Lindsay, Lange, Holtzheuer, Ebrard, Bartlet, Belser, Bullock, De Wette, Mill and Moll. Others put it at a later date, as Zahn, Jülicher, McGiffert, Von Soden, Weizsäcker, Wrede, Réville, Rovers, Ropes, Bacon, Cone, Häring, Hollman, Harnack, Goodspeed, Bousset, Schenkel, and Holtzmann about A. D. 80–90, and Pfleiderer, Volkmar, Brückner, Hausrath, and Keim about A. D. 115-118. The reasons we have given seem to us sufficient to place the date of composition somewhere in the six years preceding the overthrow of the temple worship and of the Jewish state in the destruction of Jerusalem.

XI. Purpose of Writing

The purpose of the epistle has been made plain. It is to strengthen the faith and renew the courage of the Jewish Christians by showing the superiority of Christianity to Judaism at every point. The author shows that Jesus is superior to the prophets of the old dispensation (1. 1-4), and superior to the angels (1. 5–2. 18), and superior to Moses (chapter 3), and superior to Joshua (chapter 4), and superior to Aaron (chapters 5-10). The new covenant is shown to be a better covenant than the old. The new dispensation offers the glorious consummation of all their hopes.

Were they attached to the old religious forms? Were they proud of the past history of their race? Did the entreaties and the threats of their relatives and their friends tempt some of them to backsliding? The best remedy for that was to look unto Jesus and to follow him outside of the camp, to break with the old interpretation of Scripture, and with the old delusive though fondly cherished national hopes, and if need be with the church of their fathers and all its sacrificial ritual and worship in the clear conviction that they had a better hope and a better priest and a better sacrifice and a better inheritance in Christ.

Here is a radicalism whose best warrant can be found in the sanction of history. A divine inspiration was upon this Jew enabling him to see more clearly than any other writer in the New Testament that Judaism finally and forever was doomed and that Christianity was its eternally predestined and, therefore, was to be its eternally triumphing, successor and consummation. The man Jesus had learned obedience through suffering, but now he was the glorified Victor and Consummator of all their hopes. Let them look unto him, as the example of faith (11. 1–12. 2), and of hope (12. 3-29), and of love (chapter 13).

If the authorship of this epistle is uncertain, its inspiration

is indisputable. If we do not know from what place it was written, we know that it brings us a message from heaven. If we do not know to whom it was first addressed, we know that it addresses our own hearts and speaks to our own needs. The uncertainties in matters of Introduction do not increase the difficulties of interpretation in the least. We believe that its message for us can be made clear at every point.

XII. Authorities for the Text of the Epistle

Three uncial manuscripts have a practically complete text of the Epistle to the Hebrews: Sinaiticus (fourth century), Alexandrinus (fifth century), and Claromontanus (sixth century). These three manuscripts (ℵ, A, D) are our primary authorities for the text. Vaticanus (B) would rank with them if it were complete, but it ends at 9. 14. Up to that point its testimony is as valuable as any we have, and it is now supplemented by the fragments of text found in the recently discovered Oxyrhynchus papyrus 657, which belongs to the same early date in the fourth century. This papyrus contains Heb. 2. 14–5. 5; 10. 8–11. 13; 11. 28–12. 17.

XIII. Outline of the Epistle

I. Jesus introduced, 1. 1-4. II. A mosaic of quotations, setting forth the dignity of Jesus, 1. 5-14. III. An exhortation, 2. 1-4. IV. Jesus the hope of the race, 2. 5-18. (1) The Dignity and Destiny of Man, 2. 5-8; (2) fulfilled in Jesus, 2. 9; (3) who was perfected through suffering, 2. 10; and (4) is one with us, 2. 11-18. V. Jesus greater than Moses, 3. 1-6. VI. A Second Exhortation, 3. 7–4. 16. (1) Harden not your hearts, 3. 7-19, but (2) strive to enter into God's rest, 4. 1-11, for (3) God will know all about you, 4. 12, 13; and (4) Jesus sympathizes and will help, 4. 14-16. VII. Preliminary Statements Con-

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES[1]

I. Characteristics of the Epistle

1. Jewish. The Epistle of James is the most Jewish writing in the New Testament. There are other books of the New Testament which seem to have been written with especial reference to the Jewish race. We believe that the Gospel according to Matthew was written primarily for the Jews. The Epistle to the Hebrews is addressed explicitly to them. The Apocalypse is full of the spirit of the Old Testament. The Epistle of Jude is Jewish too. Yet all of these books have more of the distinctively Christian element in them than we find in the Epistle of James.

If we eliminate two or three passages containing references to Christ, the whole epistle might find its place just as properly in the canon of the Old Testament as in that of the New, as far as its substance of doctrine and contents is concerned. That could not be said of any other book in the New Testament. There is no mention of the incarnation or of the resurrection, the two fundamental facts of the Christian faith. The word "gospel" does not occur in the epistle. There is no suggestion that the Messiah has appeared and no presentation of the possibility of redemption through him. There is no missionary message in this epistle. We never could gather from its contents what sort of preaching it was which swept the multitudes of converts into the early church. No details of the second coming are given. There is no mention of the Christian sacraments and no instruction concerning the organization of the Christian Church.

[1] A portion of this discussion was prepared for the International Standard Bible Encyclopædia, and is reproduced here by permission.

The teaching throughout is that of a lofty morality which aims at the fulfillment of the requirements of the Mosaic law. It is not strange, therefore, that Spitta and others have thought that we have in the Epistle of James a treatise written by an unconverted Jew which has been adapted to Christian use by the interpolation of the two phrases containing the name of Christ in 1. 1 and 2. 1. Spitta thinks that this alone can be the explanation of the fact that we have here an epistle practically ignoring the life and work of Christ and every distinctively Christian doctrine and without a trace of any of the great controversies in the early Christian Church or any of the specific features of its propaganda. This judgment is a superficial one and rests upon superficial indications rather than upon an appreciation of the underlying spirit and principles of the book. The spirit of Christ is here, and there is no need to label it. The principles of this epistle are the principles of the Sermon on the Mount.

There are more parallels to that Sermon in this epistle than can be found anywhere else in the New Testament in the same space. The epistle represents the idealization of Jewish legalism under the transforming influence of the Christian motive and life. It is not a theological discussion. It is an ethical appeal. It has to do with the outward life, for the most part; and the life it pictures is that of a Jew informed with the spirit of Christ. The spirit is invisible in the epistle as in the individual man. It is the body which appears and the outward life with which that body has to do. The body of the epistle is Jewish and the outward life to which it exhorts is that of a profoundly pious Jew. The Jews who were familiar with the Old Testament would read this epistle and find its language and tone that to which they were accustomed in their sacred books.

The Epistle of James evidently is written by a Jew for Jews. It is Jewish in character throughout. This is appar-

ent in the following particulars: (1) The epistle is addressed "to the twelve tribes which are of the Dispersion" (1. 1). The Jews were scattered abroad through the ancient world. From Babylon to Rome, wherever any community of them might be gathered for commercial or social purposes, these exhortations could be carried and read. Probably the epistle was circulated most widely in Syria and Asia Minor, but it may have gone out to the ends of the earth. Here and there in the ghettos of the Roman empire groups of the Jewish exiles would gather and listen while one of their number read this letter from home. All of its terms and all of its allusions would be familiar to them. (2) Their meeting place is called "your synagogue" (2. 2). This was the Jewish name for the place of religious assembly, and the Jews to whom James wrote had no better name as yet for the building in which their Christian assemblies were held. Epiphanius declares that the Christian churches in Palestine were called synagogues as late as the fourth century.[2] It was necessary that some time should elapse before any sharp distinction would be made between the new Christian church and the old Jewish synagogue, and among the Christian Jews the old name naturally would be retained for a generation or two at least. (3) Abraham is mentioned as "our father" (2. 21), and no indication is given that the fatherhood is to be understood in any other than the literal sense. (4) God is given the Old Testament name "the Lord of Sabaoth," 5. 4. (5) The law is not to be spoken against nor judged but reverently and royally obeyed. It is an authoritative law to which every loyal Jew will be subject. It is a law of liberty and, therefore, to be freely obeyed, 2. 8-12; 4. 11. (6) The sins of the flesh are not inveighed against in the epistle but those sins to which the Jews were more conspicuously liable, such as the love

[2] Haer., xxx, 18.

of money and the distinction which money may bring, 2. 2-4, worldliness and pride, 4. 4-6, impatience and murmuring, 5. 7-11, and other sins of the tongue, 3. 1-12; 4. 11, 12. (7) The illustrations of faithfulness and patience and prayer are found in Old Testament characters, in Abraham, 2. 21, Rahab, 2. 25, Job, 5. 11, and Elijah, 5. 17, 18. (8) The whole atmosphere of the epistle is Jewish. The author has all of the twelve tribes in mind as he writes and he exhorts them all to fulfill the law of Moses, knowing that as they do so they will fulfill the law of Christ. In this epistle the gospel is the perfected law, of which Jeremiah prophesied that it would be written upon the heart.[3] There are references to Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Job, Proverbs, and Isaiah, as books perfectly familiar to the readers. The mention of the first fruits (1. 18), and the parallel between worldliness and spiritual adultery (4. 4) would be appreciated most fully by students of the Old Testament. (9) The illustrations from nature are such as would appeal to any one familiar with Palestine, a land of the fig and the olive and the vine (3. 12), with salt springs as well as fountains flowing from the limestone rocks (3. 11), with the Dead Sea of salt whose waters never can be sweet (3. 11), and the lively Sea of Galilee whose waves lash the shore (1. 6), with scorching winds (1. 11), and early and latter rains (5. 7). (10) We are told that the vocabulary of James consists of about five hundred and seventy words, and all but twenty-five of these are to be found in the Greek Old Testament, including the Apocrypha.[4] Evidently the author is perfectly familiar with the Septuagint, and he seems to expect that his readers shall be equally so. (11) The epistle is theocentric rather than Christocentric throughout; and again and again where

[3] Jer. 31. 33.

[4] Ropes, Commentary on James, p. 25.

we naturally would expect Christ's example to be mentioned we are referred to some Old Testament illustration instead.

When these indications are taken together and we remember the brevity of the epistle in which they are accumulated, we must conclude that both the author and the readers are Jewish in training and outlook, and for them, as Mayor says, "Christian ideas are still clothed in Jewish forms."[5] The author of this epistle is a Hebrew of the Hebrews. He is a Hebrew prophet in a Christian pulpit. He is a Hebrew rabbi in the Christian Church. His epistle is one of the connecting links between the Old Testament and the New Testament, true to the Old in its form and true to the New in its spirit, the most Jewish of the New Testament books and yet Christian to the core and worthy of a place in the canon of the Christian Church.

Luther would have ruled it out of the New Testament canon because it said so little about Christian doctrines or the Christ. He said: "It teaches Christian people, and yet does not once notice the Passion, the Resurrection, the Spirit of Christ. The writer names Christ a few times; but he teaches nothing of him, but speaks of general faith in God." Samuel Davidson agrees with this general indictment. He declares: "The author's standpoint is Jewish rather than Christian. The ideas are cast in a Jewish mold. The very name of Christ occurs but twice, and his atonement is scarcely touched. We see little more than the threshold of the new system. It is the teaching of a Christian Jew, rather than of one who has reached a true apprehension of the essence of Christ's religion. The doctrinal development is imperfect. It is only necessary to read the entire epistle to perceive the truth of these remarks.

"In warning his readers against transgression of the law by partiality to individuals the author adduces Jewish rather

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[5] Mayor, Commentary on James, p. ii.

than Christian motives (2. 8-13). The greater part of the third chapter, respecting the government of the tongue, is of the same character, in which Christ's example is not once alluded to, the illustrations being taken from objects in nature. The warning against uncharitable judgment does not refer to Christ, or to God, who puts his Spirit in the hearts of believers, but to the law (4. 10-12). He who judges his neighbor judges the law. The exhortation to feel and act under constant remembrance of the dependence of our life on God belongs to the same category (4. 13-17).

"He that knows good without doing it is earnestly admonished to practice virtue and to avoid self-security, without reference to motives connected with redemption. Job and the prophets are quoted as examples of patience, not Christ; and the efficacy of prayer is proved by the instance of Elias, without allusion to the Redeemer's promise (5. 17). The epistle is wound up after the same Jewish fashion, though the opportunity of mentioning Christ, who gave himself a sacrifice for sin, presented itself naturally."[6]

It is true that the epistle is written from a Jewish standpoint and that it has a Jewish flavor throughout, but these things are no more true of it than of the Sermon on the Mount. We believe that the Epistle of James is as full of the spirit of Jesus as is that Sermon. The First Epistle of John says nothing about the cross or the resurrection, and yet no one questions its thoroughgoing spirituality or Christianity on that account. The Epistle of James is very different from the First Epistle of John, but we believe that the one epistle is just as Christian as the other. The First Epistle of John represents the mystical Christianity of the close of the first century of church history. The Epistle of James represents the practical morality of Jewish Christian-

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[6] Davidson, Introduction to the Study of the New Testament, vol. i, pp. 327, 328.

ity in the first generation of the Christian Church, when that church was still a synagogue and its Jewish members were still loyal to the Mosaic law and were endeavoring to fulfill it in the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount, which seemed to them to represent the spirit of Jesus their Lord. It was written by a Jew to Jews, and it is the most Jewish book in the New Testament, but its author is a Christian, and all he has to say he says in the light of the revelation made by Christ.

2. **Authoritative.** The writer of this epistle speaks as one having authority. He is not on his defense as Paul so often is. There is no trace of apology in his presentation of truth. His official position must have been recognized and unquestioned. He is as sure of his standing with his readers as he is of the absoluteness of his message. No Old Testament lawgiver or prophet was more certain that he spoke the word of the Lord. He has the vehemence of Elijah and the assured meekness of Moses. He has been called "the Amos of the New Testament," and there are paragraphs which recall the very expressions used by Amos and which are full of the same fiery eloquence and prophetic fervor. Both fill their writings with metaphors drawn from the sky and the sea, from natural objects and domestic experiences. Both seem to be country bred and to be in sympathy with simplicity and poverty. Both inveigh against the luxury and the cruelty of the idle rich and both abhor the ceremonial and the ritual which is not backed by individual righteousness.

Malachi was not the last of the prophets. John the Baptist was not the last prophet of the Old Dispensation. The writer of this epistle stands at the end of that prophetic line, and he is greater than John the Baptist or any who have preceded him because he stands within the borders of the kingdom of Christ. He speaks with authority, as a messenger of God. He belongs to the goodly fellowship of

the prophets and of the apostles. He has the authority of both. There are fifty-four imperatives in the one hundred and eight verses of this epistle. There is not a word of praise; but there is much fault suggested among both the Christian and the non-Christian Jews to whom James writes. He reproves, rebukes, exhorts like an authorized messenger of God.

3. **Practical.** The epistle is interested in conduct more than in creed. It has very little formulated theology, less than any other epistle of its length in the New Testament; but it insists upon practical morality throughout. It begins and it closes with an exhortation to patience and prayer. It preaches a gospel of good works, based upon love to God and love to man. It demands liberty, equality, fraternity for all. It enjoins humility and justice and peace. It prescribes singleness of purpose and steadfastness of soul. It requires obedience to the law, control of the passions and control of the tongue. Its ideal is to be found in a good life, characterized by the meekness of wisdom.

The writer of the epistle has caught the spirit of the ancient prophets, but the lessons he teaches are taken for the most part from the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha. His direct quotations are all from the Pentateuch and the book of Proverbs; but it has been estimated that there are ten allusions to the book of Proverbs, six to the book of Job, five to the book of the Wisdom of Solomon, and fifteen to the Book of Ecclesiasticus or the Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach. This wisdom literature furnishes the themes of his meditation and a considerable portion of his teaching. James has much to say about the wisdom which cometh down from above, and is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, without hypocrisy (3. 15-17), and the whole epistle shows that the author had stored his mind with the rich treasure of the ancient Wisdom books,

and his material while offered as his own is both old and new.

The form is largely that of the Wisdom literature of the Jews. It has more parallels with Jesus the son of Sirach than with any writer of the sacred books. So many of these coincidences occur in the first chapter that it has been suggested that James must have been reading the Book of Ecclesiasticus just before he sat down to write his own epistle. Farrar points out the fact that this familiarity with the Alexandrian apocryphal literature "is the more striking because in other respects James shows no sympathy with Alexandrian speculations. There is not in him the faintest tinge of Philonian philosophy; on the contrary, he belongs in a marked degree to the school of Jerusalem. He is a thorough Hebraizer, a typical Judaist. All his thoughts and phrases move normally in the Palestinian sphere. . . . The sapiential literature of the Old Testament was the *least* specifically Israelite. It was the direct precursor of Alexandrian morals. It deals with mankind, and not with the Jew. Yet James, who shows so much partiality for this literature, is of all the writers of the New Testament the least Alexandrian and the most Judaic."[7]

There is little or no trace of the Pauline or the Johannine type of teaching in the Epistle of James. This epistle goes back of these to the primitive teaching of Jesus in Galilee. In the same way James ignores all the later speculations of the Alexandrian and Philonian philosophy, and while making use of that portion of the Alexandrian literature which seemed to him to be in harmony with the teachings of the older Wisdom books he prefers to go back to these for his final authority. He borrows much from these books for the form of his writing, but the substance of his exhortation is to be found in the synoptics and more par-

[7] Farrar, The Early Days of Christianity, vol. i, pp. 517, 518.

ticularly in the Sermon on the Mount. His wisdom is the wisdom of Jesus, the son of Joseph, who is the Christ.

These are the three outstanding characteristics of this epistle. It is the most Jewish and least Christian of the writings in the New Testament. That is to say, the Christianity of this epistle is latent rather than apparent, as in the other books. It is the most authoritative in its tone of any of the epistles in the New Testament, unless it be those of the apostle John. John must have occupied a position of undisputed primacy in the Christian Church after the death of all the other members of the apostolic band and at the time of the writing of his epistles. It is noteworthy that the writer of this epistle assumes a tone of like authority with him. John was the apostle of love, Paul of faith, and Peter of hope. This writer is the apostle of good works, the apostle of the wisdom which manifests itself in peace and purity, mercy and morality, obedience to the royal law, the law of liberty. In its Jewish form, its authoritative tone, and its insistence upon practical morality the epistle is unique among the New Testament books.

II. Author of the Epistle

The address of the epistle states that the writer is "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1. 1). The tradition of the church has identified this James with the brother of our Lord. Clement of Alexandria says that Peter and James and John, who were the three apostles most honored by the Lord, chose James, the Lord's brother, to be the bishop of Jerusalem after the Lord's ascension.[8] This tradition agrees well with all the notices of James in the New Testament books.

When Peter was released from prison he asked that the news be sent to James and to the brethren.[9] In the apostolic conference held at Jerusalem, after Peter and Paul and

[8] Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. ii. 1. [9] Acts 12. 17.

Barnabas had spoken, James sums up the whole discussion, and his decision is adopted by the assembly and formulated in a letter which has some very striking parallels in its phraseology to this epistle.[10] When Paul came to Jerusalem for the last time he reported his work to James and all the elders present with him.[11] In the Epistle to the Galatians Paul says that at the time of one of his visits to Jerusalem he saw none of the apostles save Peter and James, the Lord's brother.[12] At another visit he received the right hand of fellowship from James and Cephas and John.[13] At a later time certain who came from James to Antioch led Peter into backsliding from his former position of tolerance toward the Gentiles as equals in the Christian Church.[14]

All of these references would lead us to suppose that James stood in a position of supreme authority in the mother church at Jerusalem, the oldest church of Christendom. He presides in their assemblies. He speaks the final and authoritative word. Peter and Paul defer to him. Paul mentions his name before that of Peter and John. When he was exalted to this leadership we do not know, but all indications seem to point to the fact that he was the recognized executive authority in the church at Jerusalem, which was the church of Pentecost and the church of the apostles. All Jews looked to Jerusalem as the chief seat of their worship and the central authority of their religion. All Christian Jews would look to Jerusalem as the primitive source of their organization and faith, and the head of the church at Jerusalem would be recognized by them as their chief authority. The authoritative tone of this epistle comports well with this position of primacy ascribed to James.

All tradition agrees in describing James as a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a man of the most rigid and ascetic morality, faithful in his observance of all the ritual regulations

[10] Acts 15. 6–29. [11] Acts 21. 18. [12] Gal 1. 18, 19.
[13] Gal. 2. 9. [14] Gal 2. 12.

of the Jewish faith. Hegesippus tells us that he was holy from his mother's womb. He drank no wine nor strong drink. He ate no flesh. He alone was permitted to enter into the holy place, and he was found there frequently upon his knees begging forgiveness for the people, and his knees became hard like those of a camel in consequence of his constantly bending them in his worship of God and asking forgiveness for the people. He was called James the Just. All had confidence in his sincerity and integrity, and many were persuaded by him to believe on the Christ.

This Jew, faithful in the observance of all that the Jews held sacred and more devoted to the temple worship than the most pious among them, was a good choice for the head of the Christian Church. The blood of David flowed in his veins. He had all the Jew's pride in the special privileges of the chosen race. The Jews respected him and the Christians revered him. No man among them commanded the esteem of the entire population as much as he. He was more discreet than Peter. He had a better reputation for orthodoxy than Paul. He was more popular in the Jerusalem church than John. He was famous for his prudence and his patience and his wisdom. At Jerusalem he was a better bishop than any of the apostles would have been. He was so good an example of Jewish piety that he had free access to the Jews in his evangelistic efforts. He could reach and influence them as Paul never could have hoped to do. It was his mission, for which no one was so well adapted as he, to show the fundamental unity of the law and the gospel and to preach the fulfillment of the law in the spirit of Christ.

His epistle was to bind the Old and the New Testaments together and was for that reason to be essential to the completeness of the Sacred Book; and in the same way his ministry in Jerusalem and his presidency over the Jerusalem church bridged over the crisis years in which the Christian

Jews were living among and laboring for their countrymen and still hoping that they might be won to a better faith. They themselves were loyal to the Mosaic law while they rejoiced in the freedom won for them in Christ. We know of no man in that early church who could have served the Christian faith in that Jewish population of the capital city so well as James the just, the brother of Jesus, the servant of God and the servant of his fellow men.

Josephus tells us that Ananus, the high priest, had James stoned to death, and that the most equitable of the citizens immediately rose in revolt against such a lawless procedure and Ananus was deposed after only three months' rule.[15] This testimony of Josephus simply substantiates all we know from other sources concerning the high standing of James in the whole community. Hegesippus says that James first was thrown from a pinnacle of the temple, and then they stoned him because he was not killed by the fall, and he finally was beaten over the head with a fuller's club; and then he adds, significantly, "Immediately Vespasian besieged them."[16] There would seem to have been quite a widespread conviction among both the Christians and the Jews that the afflictions which fell upon the Holy City and the chosen people in the following years were in part a visitation because of the great crime of the murder of this just man. We can understand how a man with this reputation and character would write an epistle so Jewish in form and substance and so insistent in its demands for a practical morality as is the Epistle of James. All the characteristics of the epistle seem explicable on the supposition of authorship by James, the brother of our Lord.

III. The Style of the Epistle

1. **Its Plainness.** The sentence construction is simple and straightforward. It reminds us of the English of Bunyan

[15] Josephus, Antiq. xx. 9. [16] Eusebius, Hist. Eccl., ii, 23.

and DeFoe. There usually is no good reason for misunderstanding anything James says. He puts his truth plainly, and the words he uses have no hidden or mystical meanings. His thought is transparent as his life. Zahn says of it: "Without any extended discussion or argument, James shows that he has a vital grasp of the truth, in language which for forcibleness is without parallel in early Christian literature, excepting the discourses of Jesus. We have here the eloquence that comes from the heart and goes to the conscience, a kind which never was learned in a school of rhetoric. The flow of words seems to be just as natural as the succession of ideas."[17]

The plain man with a gift for style does not indulge in periphrasis and elaborate sentence construction. He says what he means straight out and straightaway. There are no double relative pronouns, no genitive absolutes, no epexegetical infinitives in the Epistle of James. That is to say, there are no long sentences, becoming involved both in construction and thought. Mayor says that there are only two sentences in the epistle which are more than four lines in length, and in each of these the construction is clear and the meaning perfectly intelligible.[18] On the other hand, we find sentences ten lines long in the First Epistle of Peter, twelve lines long in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and twenty lines long in the Epistle to the Ephesians. There is nothing of the oratorical amplitude of the Epistle to the Hebrews or of the impassioned and ungrammatical eloquence of the apostle Paul in the Epistle of James. "The sentences are short, simple, direct, conveying weighty thoughts in weighty words."[19] Sometimes they remind us of the Proverbs, sometimes of the Old Testament prophets, and sometimes of the parables of Jesus. Always they are simplicity personified, and in that fact they find much of their power.

[17] Zahn, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 111.
[18] Mayor, Commentary, p. cclv.
[19] Mayor, *op. cit.*, p. ccxlix.

2. Its Good Greek. It is somewhat surprising to find that the Greek of the Epistle of James is better than that of the other New Testament writers, with the single exception of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Of course this may be due to the fact that James had the services of an amanuensis who was a Greek scholar or that his own manuscript was revised by such a man; but, although unexpected, it is not impossible that James himself may have been capable of writing such Greek as this. It is not the good Greek of the classics and it is not the poor and provincial Greek of Paul. There is more care for literary form than in the uncouth periods of the Gentile apostle; and the vocabulary would seem to indicate an acquaintance with the literary as well as the commercial and the conversational Greek.

"Galilee was studded with Greek towns, and it was certainly in the power of any Galilæan to gain a knowledge of Greek. . . . We know also that the neighboring town, Gadara, was celebrated as an important seat of Greek learning and literature, and that the author of our epistle shows an acquaintance with ideas and phrases which were probably derived, mediately or immediately, from the Stoic philosophers. If we call to mind further that he seems to have paid particular attention to the sapiential books, both canonical and apocryphal, and that a main point in these is to encourage the study of 'the dark sayings of the wise'; that the wisdom of Edom and Teman is noted as famous by some of the prophets, and that the interlocutors in the book of Job are assigned with probability to this and the neighboring regions—taking into account all these considerations, we may reasonably suppose that our author would not have scrupled to avail himself of the opportunities within his reach, so as to master the Greek language, and learn something of Greek philosophy. This would be natural, even if we think of James as impelled only by a desire to gain

wisdom and knowledge for himself, but if we think of him also as the principal teacher of the Jewish believers, many of whom were Hellenists, instructed in the wisdom of Alexandria, then the natural bent would take the shape of duty: he would be a student of Greek in order that he might be a more effective instructor to his own people."[20]

This is the conclusion reached by the greatest English commentator on this epistle, and it seems to us altogether reasonable. The Greek of the epistle is the studied Greek of one who was not a native to it but who had familiarized himself with its literature. James could have done so and the epistle may be proof that he did. James lived in the neighborhood of Gadara and other Greek cities in his early life, and Mommsen tells us that the use of the Greek language was compulsory in these communities and that the Jews in the Greek towns became Greek-speaking Orientals,[21] and Mayor concludes that "it was not more impossible for a peasant of Galilee to learn to write good Greek than for one who had been brought up as a Welsh peasant to learn to write good English, or for a Breton to write good French; far more likely, we might think, than that a clever Hindoo should, as so many have done, make himself familiar with the best English authors, and write a good English style."[22]

Mitchell suggests these further considerations: "Matthew, as an official of the government, must have understood and used Greek. Among the apostles, Andrew and Philip have Greek names by which they must have been called from boyhood. Josephus, born A. D. 37, a native of Jerusalem, wrote in Greek. . . . The Greek Jews, who lived in the cities of the empire, used Greek as their everyday language; even when they returned and settled in Jerusalem

[20] Mayor, Commentary on James, pp. cclxiv, cclxv.
[21] Mommsen, The Provinces, vol. ii, pp. 162f.
[22] Mayor, Commentary, p. lxi.

they had their own synagogue, where the Greek Bible was read and the Greek service held, Acts 6. 9. . . . The first three thousand converts were, judging from their home names, Greek-speaking people. From the first the church was bilingual, and it was so difficult to administer it unless some of the rulers could speak Greek, that the seven Greek-speaking deacons were appointed, all of whom have Greek names, Acts 6. 5. . . . For about twenty years James presided over this bilingual community. It is not difficult, then, to suppose that in that time he acquired mastery of the Greek language. Thousands of Jews engaged in commerce had to do the same,"[23] and it is not likely that James would be any less earnest than they in the acquisition of a tongue which would enable him to be doubly serviceable to the cause of the Christ.

It is surprising that James wrote such good Greek, but it was surprising that John Bunyan wrote such good English. Neither Shakespeare nor Bunyan nor Burns had a university education and yet their books are models of English undefiled. James may have belonged to this peasant genius type in literature.

3. **Its Vividness.** James never is content to talk in abstractions. He always sets a picture before his own eyes and those of his readers. He has the dramatic instinct. He has the secret of sustained interest. He is not discussing things in general but things in particular. He is an artist and believes in concrete realities. At the same time he has a touch of poetry in him and a fine sense of the analogies running through all nature and all life. The doubting man is like the sea spume, 1. 6. The rich man fades away in his goings even as the beauty of the flower falls and perishes (1. 11). Lust is a harlot, the mother of sin and the grandmother of death (1. 15). The heedless hearing of the word of life is

[23] Mitchell, Commentary on Hebrews and the General Epistles, pp. 34, 35.

like the careless glance at one's face in the mirror forgotten as soon as something else has attracted the attention (1. 23, 24).

The synagogue scene with its distinction between the rich and the poor is set before us with the clear-cut impressiveness of a cameo (2. 1-4). The Pecksniffian philanthropist who seems to think that men can be fed not by bread alone but by the words which proceed from his mouth is pilloried here for all time (2. 15, 16). The untamable tongue set on fire of hell is put in the full blaze of its world of iniquity, and the damage it does is shown to be like that of a forest fire (3. 1-12). The picture of the wisdom which comes from above with its sevenfold excellencies of purity, peaceableness, gentleness, mercy, fruitfulness, impartiality, sincerity, is worthy to hang in the gallery of the world's masterpieces (3. 17). The vaunting tradesmen whose lives are like vanishing vapor stand there before the eyes of all in Jerusalem (4. 13-16). The rich, whose luxuries he describes even while he denounces their cruelties and prophesies their coming day of slaughter, are the rich who walk the streets of his own city (5. 1-6). Always the people to whom he writes or of whom he writes are before his eyes. He pictures them true to life. They are characters never to be lost sight of henceforth in world literature. The hypocritical usher in the synagogue, the theological disputant proud of his faith without works, the teacher with uncontrolled tongue, the traveling merchant who cannot travel far enough or fast enough to escape death, the wicked rich and the oppressed poor, the peaceable wise man and the fighting fool —here they are, pilloried or pedestaled for all time to come. James has pictured them in unforgettable fashion and the world is the richer for the genuineness and the genius which has given them immortal life. James is a poet and a prophet, and an artist as well.

His short sentences go like shots straight to the mark.

We feel the impact and the impress of them. There is an energy behind them and a reality in them which make them live in our thought. His abrupt questions are like the quick interrogations of a cross-examining lawyer (2. 4, 5, 6, 7, 14, 16; 3. 11, 12; 4. 1, 4, 5, 12, 14). His proverbs have the intensity of the accumulated and compressed wisdom of the ages. They are irreducible minimums. They are memorable sayings, treasured in the speech of the world ever since his day. They remind us of the sayings of Jesus, and we could give them no higher praise than that. James had something of the versatility of Jesus too. Now he defeats an antagonist in straight debate, now he crushes him with cutting irony, and now he preaches to him in pure poetry of illustration and parable, or takes his favorite scripture and proves to him on the basis of that text that the truth is the opposite of that which he holds. There is an energy and vitality about it all which makes it vivid and interesting today.

4. Its Duadiplosis. Sometimes James adds sentence to sentence with the repetition of some leading word or phrase (1. 1-6; 1. 19-24; 3. 2-8). It is a method by which a discussion could be continued indefinitely. Nothing but the vividness of the imagery and the intensity of the thought saves James from fatal monotony in the use of this device.

5. Its Poetic Conceptions. James has a keen eye for illustrations. He is not blind to the beauties and wonders of nature. He sees what is happening on every hand and he is quick to catch any homiletical suggestion it may hold. Does he stand by the seashore? Then the surge which is driven by the wind and tossed reminds him of the man who is unstable in all his ways because he has no anchorage of faith and his convictions are like driftwood on a sea of doubt (1. 6).[24] Then he notices that the great ships are

[24] Luther calls this passage "der einzige und beste Ort in der ganzen Epistel."

turned about by a small rudder and he thinks how the tongue is a small member but it accomplishes great things (3. 4, 5). Does he walk under the sunlight and rejoice in it as the source of so many good and perfect gifts? He sees in it an image of the goodness of God which never is eclipsed and never is exhausted, ever the same (1. 17).

He uses the natural phenomena of the land in which he lives to make his meaning plain at every turn—the flower of the field which passes away (1. 10, 11), the forest fire which sweeps the mountainside and like a living torch lights up the whole land (3. 5), the sweet and salt springs (3. 11), the fig trees and olive trees and the vines (3. 12), the seed-sowing and the fruit-bearing (3. 18), the morning mist which immediately is lost to view (4. 14), the early and the latter rain for which the husbandman waiteth patiently (5. 7). There is more of the appreciation of nature in the one short Epistle of James than in all the epistles of Paul put together. Human life was more interesting to Paul than the beauties of nature were; but James is interested in human life too. He is constantly endowing inanimate things with living qualities.

He represents sin as a harlot, conceiving and bringing forth death (1. 15). The word of truth has a like power and conceives and brings forth those who live to God's praise (1. 18). Pleasures are like gay hosts of enemies in a tournament who deck themselves bravely and ride forth with singing and laughter, but whose mission is to wage war and to kill (4. 1, 2). The laborers may be dumb in the presence of the rich because of their dependence and their fear, but their wages, fraudulently withheld, have a tongue and cry out to high heaven for vengeance (5. 4). What is friendship with the world? It is adultery, James says (4. 4). The rust of unjust riches testifies against those who have accumulated it and then turns upon them and eats their flesh like fire (5. 3).

James observed the man who glanced at himself in the mirror in the morning and saw that his face was not clean and who went away and thought no more about it for that whole day, and he found in him an illustration of the one who heard the word and did not do it (1. 23-24). The epistle is full of these rhetorical figures, and they prove that James was something of a poet at heart, even as Jesus was. He writes in prose, but there is a marked rhythm in all of his speech. He has frequent alliterations, reduplicating letters and syllables and balancing clauses over against each other. He has an ear for harmony as he has an eye for beauty everywhere.

6. **Its Unlikeness to Paul.** The Pauline epistles begin with salutations and close with benedictions. They are filled with autobiographical touches and personal messages. No one of these things appears here. The epistle begins and ends with all abruptness. It has an address but no thanksgiving. There are no personal messages and no indications of any intimate personal relationship between the author and his readers. They are his beloved brethren. He knows their needs and their sins, but he never may have seen their faces or have visited their homes. The epistle is more like a prophet's appeal to a nation than a personal letter. Paul tells us much about the work of Christ, but he seldom or never quotes any of the sayings of Jesus. On the contrary, James continually is repeating the words of the Master while he tells us little or nothing about his work. The Epistle of James is a short epistle, but it contains more parallels with the discourses of Jesus than can be found in all the thirteen epistles of Paul, some of which are three or four times its length.

7. **Its Likeness to Jesus.** Both the substance of the teaching and the method of its presentation in this epistle remind us of the discourses of Jesus. James says less about the Master than any other writer in the New Testament,

but his speech is more like that of the Master than the speech of any one of them. There are at least ten parallels to the Sermon on the Mount in this short epistle, and for almost everything James has to say we can recall some statement of Jesus which might have suggested it. When the parallels fail at any point we are inclined to suspect that James may be repeating some unrecorded utterance of our Lord. He seems absolutely faithful to his memory of his brother's teaching. He is the servant of Jesus in all his exhortation and persuasion.

J. H. Moulton thought that the epistle contained a considerable number of otherwise unrecorded sayings of Jesus, and G. Currie Martin suggests that originally it consisted of a collection of these Sayings of Jesus with brief comments upon them appended by James. As in the fourth Gospel it sometimes is impossible to distinguish between the words of the Master and the comments of the evangelist, so here it is impossible now to tell how much of this epistle belongs to Jesus and how much to James. The truths are of the same value proceeding from either source. Truth is as much truth, coming from the lips of James as from the lips of Jesus. Yet we would like to know just how much of this epistle is quoted and how much James would feel was more directly his own.

Did the Master shock his disciples' faith by the loftiness of the Christian ideal he set before them in his great sermon, "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5. 48)? James set the same high standard in the very forefront of his epistle, "Let patience have *its* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing" (1. 4). Did the Master say, "Ask, and it shall be given you" (Matt. 7. 7)? James says, "If any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, . . . and it shall be given him" (1. 5). Did the Master add a condition to his sweeping promise to prayer and say, "Whosoever . . .

shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he saith cometh to pass; he shall have it" (Mark 11. 23)? James hastens to add the same unlimited and astonishing condition, "Let him ask in faith, nothing doubting: for he that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed" (1. 6).

Did the Master close the great sermon with his parable of the wise man and the foolish man, saying, "Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man. . . . And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man" (Matt. 7. 24-26)? James is much concerned about wisdom and therefore he exhorts his readers, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves" (1. 22). Had the Master declared, "If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them" (John 13. 17)? James echoes the thought when he says, "A doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing" (1. 25).

Did the Master say to his disciples, "Blessed *are* ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God" (Luke 6. 20)? James has the same sympathy with the poor, and he says, "Hearken, my beloved brethren, did not God choose them that are poor as to the world *to be* rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he promised to them that love him?" (2. 5.) Did the Master inveigh against the rich, and say, "Woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you, ye that are full now! for ye shall hunger. Woe *unto you,* ye that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep" (Luke 6. 24-25)? James bursts forth into the same invective and prophesies the same sad reversal of fortune, "Go to now, ye rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you" (5. 1). "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let

your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness" (4. 8, 9).

Had Jesus said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matt. 7. 1)? James repeats the exhortation, "Speak not one against another, brethren. He that . . . judgeth his brother, . . . judgeth the law: . . . but who art thou that judgeth thy neighbor?" (4. 11, 12). Had Jesus said, "Whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matt. 23. 12)? We find the very words in James, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall exalt you" (4. 10). Had Jesus said, "I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by the heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of his feet. . . . But let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one" (Matt. 5. 34-37)? Here in James we come upon the exact parallel, "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by the heaven, nor by the earth, nor by any other oath: but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; that ye fall not under judgment" (5. 12).

We remember how the Master began the Sermon on the Mount with the declaration that even those who mourned and were persecuted and reviled and reproached were blessed in spite of all their suffering and trial. Then we notice that James begins his epistle with the same paradoxical putting of the Christian faith, "Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into manifold temptations" or trials (1. 2). We remember how Jesus proceeded in his sermon to set forth the spiritual significance and the assured permanence of the law; and we notice that James treats the law with the same respect and puts upon it the same high value. He calls it the perfect law (1. 25), the royal law (2. 8), the law of liberty (2. 12). We remember what Jesus said about forgiving others in order that we ourselves may be forgiven, and we know where James got his au-

thority for saying, "Judgment *is* without mercy to him that hath showed no mercy" (2. 13).

We remember all that the Master said about good trees and corrupt trees being known by their fruits, "Do *men* gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" (Matt. 7. 16-20.) Then in the epistle of James we find a like question, "Can a fig tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a vine figs?" (3. 12.) We remember that the Master said, "Know ye that he is nigh, *even* at the doors" (Matt. 24. 33). We are not surprised to find the statement here in James, "Behold, the judge standeth before the doors" (5. 9). These reminiscences of the sayings of the Master meet us on every page. It may be that there are many more of them than we are able to identify. Their number is sufficiently large, however, to show us that James is steeped in the truths taught by Jesus, and not only their substance but their phraseology constantly reminds us of him.

IV. Date of the Epistle

There are those who think that the Epistle of James is the oldest epistle in the New Testament. Among those who favor an early date are Erdmann, Huther, Krüger, Mayor, Plumptre, Alford, Adeney, Gibson, Bartlet, Carr, Salmon, Stanley, Stevens, Renan, Weiss, Zahn, Beyschlag, Belser, Bunsen, Hofmann, Lechler, Mangold, Ritschl, Neander, Schneckenburger, Theile, Thiersch, and Dods. The reasons assigned for this conclusion are (1) the general Judaic tone of the epistle which seems to antedate the admission of the Gentiles in any alarming numbers into the church; but since the epistle is addressed only to Jews why should the Gentiles be mentioned in it, whatever its date? and (2) the fact that Paul and Peter are supposed to have quoted from James in their writing; but this matter of quotation is always an uncertain one, and it has been argued ably that the quotation has been the other way about.

Others think that the epistle was written toward the close of James's life. Among these are Bartmann, Barth, Bleek, Cornely, Felten, Gurney, Hort, Hug, Jacoby, Mill, Sabatier, Scholten, Trenkle, Weiffenbach, Kern, Wiesinger, Schmidt, Brückner, Wordsworth, and Farrar. These argue (1) that the epistle gives evidence of a considerable lapse of time in the history of the church, sufficient to allow of a declension from the spiritual fervor of Pentecost and the establishment of distinctions among the brethren; but any of the sins mentioned in the epistle in all probability could have been found in the church in any decade of its history. (2) James has a position of established authority, and those to whom he writes are not recent converts but members in long standing; but the position of James may have been established from a very early date, and in an encyclical of this sort we could not expect any indication of shorter or longer membership in the church. Doubtless some of those addressed were recent converts while others may have been members for many years. (3) There are references to persecutions and trials which fit the later rather than the earlier date; but all which is said on this subject might be suitable in any period of the presidency of James at Jerusalem. If it is urged (4) that there are indications of a long and disappointing delay in the second coming of the Lord in the repeated exhortation to patience in waiting for it, it is urged on the other hand that James says, "The coming of the Lord is at hand," and "The judge standeth before the doors" (5. 8-9). The same passage is cited in proof of a belief that the immediate appearance of the Lord was expected, as in the earliest period of the church, and in proof that there had been a disappointment of this earlier belief and that it had been succeeded by a feeling that there was need of patience in waiting for the coming so long delayed.

It seems clear to us that there are no decisive proofs in favor of any definite date for the epistle. It must have been

written before the martyrdom of James in the year A. D. 63, and some time during his presidency over the church at Jerusalem; but there is nothing to warrant us in coming to any more definite conclusion. Davidson, Hilgenfeld, Baur, Zeller, Volkmar, Hausrath, Brückner, Von Soden, Jülicher, Harnack, Bacon, McGiffert, Réville, Peake, Wrede, and others date the epistle variously in the post-Pauline period, from A. D. 69-70 to 140-150. The arguments for any of these dates fall far short of proof, rest largely if not wholly upon conjectures and presuppositions, and of course are inconsistent with any belief in the authorship by James, the brother of Jesus.

V. History of the Epistle

Eusebius classed the Epistle of James among those whose authenticity was disputed by some. "James is said to be the author of the first of the so-called catholic epistles. But it is to be observed that it is disputed; at least, not many of the ancients have mentioned it, as is the case likewise with the epistle that bears the name of Jude, which is also one of the seven so-called catholic epistles. Nevertheless, we know that these also, with the rest, have been read publicly in most churches."[25] Eusebius himself, however, quotes James 4. 11 as Scripture and James 5. 13 as spoken by the holy apostle. Personally he does not seem disposed to question the genuineness of the epistle.

There are parallels in phraseology which make it almost certain that the epistle is quoted in Clement of Rome in the first century as well as in Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, the Epistle to Diognetus, Irenæus, and Hermas in the second century. It is omitted in the canonical list of the Muratorian fragment, and was not included in the Old Latin version. Origen seems to be the first writer to quote the epistle ex-

[25] Eusebius, *op. cit.*, ii., 23.

plicitly as Scripture and to assert that it was written by James, the brother of the Lord. It appears in the Peshito version which omitted Second Peter, Second and Third John, and Jude, but seems to have had no scruple about James; and it was generally recognized in the East. Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory of Nazianzus, Ephraem of Edessa, Didymus of Alexandria received it as canonical. The Third Council of Carthage in 397 finally settled its status for the Western church and from that date in both the East and the West its canonicity was unquestioned until the time of the Reformation.

Erasmus and Cajetan revived the old doubts concerning it. Luther thought it contradicted Paul and therefore banished it to the appendix of his Bible. "James," he says, "has aimed to refute those who relied on faith without works, and is too weak for his task in mind, understanding and words, mutilates the Scriptures, and thus directly contradicts Paul and all Scripture, seeking to accomplish by enforcing the law what the apostles successfully effect by love. Therefore I will not place his epistle in my Bible among the proper leading books."[26] He declared it was a downright strawy epistle as compared with such as those to the Romans and to the Galatians, and it had no real evangelical character. This judgment of Luther is a very hasty and regrettable one. The modern church has refused to accept it, and it is conceded very generally now that Paul and James are in perfect agreement with each other, though their presentation of the same truth from opposite points of view brings them into apparent contradiction.

Paul says, "By grace have ye been saved through faith; . . . not of works, that no man should glory" (Eph. 2. 8, 9). "We reckon, therefore, that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law" (Rom. 3. 28). James

[26] Werke, xiv, 148.

says: "Faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself" (2. 17). "Ye see that by works a man is justified, and not only by faith" (2. 24). With these passages before him Luther said: "Many have toiled to reconcile Paul with James, . . . but to no purpose, for they are contrary. 'Faith justifies'; 'Faith does not justify'; I will pledge my life that no one can reconcile those propositions; and if he succeeds he may call me a fool."[27] It would be difficult to prove Luther a fool if Paul and James were using these words "faith," "works," and "justification" in the same sense, or even if either were writing with full consciousness of what the other had written. They both use Abraham for an example, James of justification by works and Paul of justification by faith. How can that be possible?

With the unhesitating faith characteristic of our fathers Dr. Hodge is content to say, "It is one of the great beauties of the Scriptures, that the sacred writers, in the calm consciousness of truth, in the use of popular as distinguished from philosophical language, affirm and deny the same verbal proposition, assured that the consistency and intent of their statements will make their way to the heart and conscience."[28] However, it is a little difficult for most people to see how both the affirmative and the negative of a single proposition can be maintained as true. Possibly one or two illustrations will help us at this point.

Did not the Master say at one time, "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true" (John 5. 31)? Did not the Master say at another time, "Even if I bear witness of myself, my witness is true" (John 8. 14)? Could there be a flatter contradiction than that seems to be? The conditional sentence is the same in the two passages, "If I bear witness of myself," and then the two conclusions are the exact opposites of each other—"my witness is true," and "my wit-

[27] Colloquia, ii, 202.

[28] Hodge, on 1 Cor. 8. 1.

ness is not true." Which represents the truth? Can both be true? Would not Luther have been warranted in saying, "If any man can reconcile such absolutely contradictory propositions, he may call me a fool"? Yet both those statements were made by Him who said, "I am the truth," and all of whose words we believe to have been the words of absolute truth and life. If Jesus could flatly contradict himself in this manner and yet be absolutely truthful in each of his statements, it ought to be clear that James and Paul may seem flatly to contradict each other and yet both may be absolutely warranted in their statements.

Robertson of Brighton has suggested this illustration.[29] There is a severe thunderstorm with terrific rolls of thunder and blinding flashes of lightning and a house is struck and several people are killed. An intelligent child asks his father what caused the destruction of property and life and he is told, "It was not the thunder which did it. *The destruction was caused by lightning alone, without thunder.*" Then if the child asks, "Is all lightning thus destructive?" the father answers, "No, *destruction is not caused by lightning alone, without thunder.*" What does he mean? Those two statements seem flatly to contradict each other. He means that sheet lightning is harmless, the summer lightning which plays about the horizon at the close of a sultry day. It alarms no one, for everybody knows that it is as harmless as it is noiseless. Destruction is not caused by lightning alone, without thunder. Yet when things or persons are destroyed in the thunderstorm we say, and say rightly, that the destruction is caused by the lightning alone, without any aid from the thunder. The noisy thunder is harmless, the silent lightning does the damage in each case. There are two propositions which seem to contradict each other and yet we see at once that each of them is true.

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[29] Life of Robertson, vol. ii, p. 64.

Let us suppose that James and Paul had been present when the man sick of the palsy had been brought to Jesus by his four friends who, when they could not come near the Master because of the crowd, had carried him to the roof of the house, and when they had broken it up had lowered him to the Master's feet, where the man was cured. What would James have said about it? Possibly this: "These men had faith that Jesus could cure their friend; but that faith never would have saved him. They had to carry him to the place where Jesus was; and there, if they had been content to remain on the outskirts of the crowd while Jesus was talking, their faith would have been of no avail. Faith without works is dead. They had to go to work and carry their friend to the housetop, and there they had to work to break up the roof and then they had to work to lower their friend to the feet of Jesus, and that was what brought about the cure." If James had said that, he probably would have been right in his conclusion.

Possibly Paul would have reported differently. He might have said: "Jesus saw their faith and first forgave the man's sins and then cured his palsy. It is to faith alone that forgiveness is guaranteed and it is to faith alone that such blessings are given. It was faith which brought these men to Jesus. It was faith which drove them to the roof. It was faith which led them to break up the tiling and lower the couch to the Saviour's feet. It was faith, and faith alone, which won the victory." If Paul had said that, we probably would agree that he was right in his conclusions. These two men may seem to contradict each other; but they simply are representing different points of view and they are using the same words with somewhat different connotations in mind as they use them.

(1) The faith meant by James is the faith of a dead orthodoxy, an intellectual assent to the dogmas of the church which does not result in any practical righteousness in life,

such a faith as the demons have when they believe in the being of God and simply tremble before him. The faith meant by Paul is intellectual and moral and spiritual, affects the whole man, and leads him into conscious and vital union and communion with God. It is not the faith of demons; it is the faith which redeems.

(2) Again, the works meant by Paul are the works of a dead legalism, the works done under a sense of compulsion or a feeling of duty, the works done in obedience to a law which is a taskmaster, the works of a slave and not of a son. These dead works, he declares, never can give life. The works meant by James are the works of a believer, the fruit of the faith and love born in every believer's heart and manifest in every believer's life. The possession of faith will insure this evidence in his daily conduct and conversation; and without this evidence the mere profession of faith will not save him.

(3) The justification meant by Paul is the initial justification of the Christian life. No doing of meritorious deeds will make a man worthy of salvation. He comes into the kingdom not on the basis of merit but on the basis of grace. The sinner is converted not by doing anything but by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. He approaches the threshold of the kingdom and he finds that he has no coin which is current there. He cannot buy his way in by good works; he must accept salvation by faith, as the gift of God's free grace. The justification meant by James is the justification of any after moment in the Christian life, or the final justification before the judgment throne. Good works are inevitable in the Christian life. There can be no assurance of salvation without them.

(4) Paul is looking at the root; James is looking at the fruit. Paul is talking about the beginning of the Christian life; James is talking about its continuance and consummation. With Paul the works he renounces precede faith and

are dead works. With James the faith he denounces is apart from works and is a dead faith.

(5) Paul believes in the works of godliness just as much as James. He prays that God may establish the Thessalonians in every good work (2 Thess. 2. 17). He writes to the Corinthians that God is able to make all grace abound unto them; that they, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work (2 Cor. 9. 8). He declares to the Ephesians that we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them (Eph. 2. 10). He makes a formal statement of his faith in the Epistle to the Romans, God "will render to every man according to his works: to them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life: but unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, *shall be* wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Greek; but glory and honor and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 2. 6-10). This is the final justification discussed by James, and it is just as clearly a judgment by works with Paul as with him.

(6) On the other hand, James believes in saving faith as well as Paul. He begins with the statement that the proving of our faith works patience and brings perfection (1. 3, 4). He declares that the prayer of faith will bring the coveted wisdom (1. 6). He describes the Christian profession as a holding the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory (2. 1). He says that the poor as to the world are rich in faith, and therefore heirs of the kingdom (2. 5). He quotes the passage from Genesis, "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness" (2. 23), and he explicitly asserts that Abraham's faith wrought with his works, and by works was his faith made

perfect (2.22). The faith mentioned in all these passages is the faith of the professing believer; it is not the faith which the sinner exercises in accepting salvation.

James and Paul are at one in declaring that faith and works must go hand in hand in the Christian life, and that in the Christian's experience both faith without works is dead and works without faith are dead works. They both believe in faith working through love as that which alone will avail in Christ Jesus (Gal. 5.6). Fundamentally they agree. Superficially they seem to contradict each other. That is because they are talking about different things and using the same terms with different meanings for those terms in mind.

VI. The Message of the Epistle to Our Times

1. To the Pietists. There are those who talk holiness and are hypocrites, those who make profession of perfect love and yet cannot live peaceably with their brethren, those who are full of pious phraseology but who fail in practical philanthropy. This epistle was written for them. It may not give them much comfort, but it ought to give them much profit. The mysticism which contents itself with pious frames and phrases and comes short in actual sacrifice and devoted service will find its antidote here. The antinomianism which professes great confidence in free grace but does not recognize the necessity for corresponding purity of life needs to ponder the practical wisdom of this epistle. The quietists who are satisfied to sit and sing themselves away to everlasting bliss ought to read this epistle until they catch its bugle note of inspiration to present activity and continuous good deeds. All who are long on theory and short in practice ought to steep themselves in the spirit of James; and since there are such people in every community and in every age the message of the epistle never will grow old. We read in John Wesley's Journal, "Having gone through

the Sermon on the Mount and the Epistles of Saint John, I began that of Saint James, that those who had already learned the true nature of inward holiness might be more fully instructed in outward holiness, without which also we cannot see the Lord."[30]

2. **To the Sociologists.** The sociological problems are to the front to-day. The old prophets were social reformers, and James is most like them in the New Testament. Much that he says is applicable to present-day conditions. He lays down the right principles for practical philanthropy and the proper relationships between master and man and between man and man. If the teachings of this epistle were put into practice throughout the church, it would mean the revitalization of Christianity. It would prove that the Christian religion was practical and workable and it would go far to establish the final brotherhood of man in the service of God.

3. **To the Students of the Life and Character of Jesus.** The life of our Lord is the most important life in the history of the race. It always will be a subject of the deepest interest and study. Modern research has penetrated every contributory realm for any added light upon the heredity and environment of Jesus. The people and the land, archæology and contemporary history have been cultivated intensively and extensively for any modicum of knowledge they might add to our store of information concerning the Christ. We suggest that there is a field here to which sufficient attention has not yet been given. James was the brother of the Lord. His epistle tells us much about himself. On the supposition that he did not exhort others to be what he would not furnish them an example in being, we read in this epistle his own character writ large. He was like his brother in so many things. As we study the life

[30] The Journal of John Wesley, October 9, 1739.

and character of James we come to know more about the life and character of Jesus.

Jesus and James had the same mother. From her they had a common inheritance. As far as they reproduced their mother's characteristics they were alike. They had the same home training. As far as the father could succeed in putting the impress of his own personality upon the boys they would be alike. It is noticeable in this connection that Joseph is said in the Gospel to have been a just man (Matt. 1. 19), and that James came to be known through all the early church as James the Just, and that in his epistle he may be giving this title to his brother Jesus when he says of the unrighteous rich of Jerusalem, "Ye have condemned, ye have killed the just one" (5. 6). Joseph was just, and James was just, and Jesus was just. The brothers were alike, and they were like the father in this respect. The two brothers seem to think alike and talk alike to a most remarkable degree. They represent the same home surroundings and human environment, the same religious training and inherited characteristics. Surely, then, all we learn concerning James will help us the better to understand Jesus.

They are alike in their poetic insight and practical wisdom. Both are fond of figurative speech, and it always seems natural and unforced. The discourses of Jesus are filled with birds and flowers and winds and clouds and all the sights and sounds of rural life in Palestine. The Epistle of James abounds in references to the field flowers and the meadow grass and the salt fountains and the burning wind and the early and the latter rain. Nearly every one of the natural phenomena mentioned by James is found also in the sayings of Jesus—the birds and flowers, the burning wood and the surging sea, the fig tree and the vine, the moth and the rust and the rain. These vivid character vignettes in the Epistle of James suggest that he might easily have developed them into parables like those of the Lord. His denunciation

of the rich employers and oppressors recalls the terrible indictment of the Pharisees by the Master toward the end of his ministry. The two brothers are alike in mental attitude and in spiritual alertness.

They have much in common in the material equipment of their thought. James was well versed in the apocryphal literature. May we not reasonably conclude that Jesus was just as familiar with these books as he? James seems to have acquired a comparative mastery of the Greek language and to have had some acquaintance with the Greek philosophy and poetry. Mayor calls our attention to the fact that the words *πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ καὶ πᾶν δώρημα τέλειον* make a hexameter line, with a short syllable lengthened by the metrical stress, and he says that he thinks Ewald is right in considering it to be a quotation from some Hellenistic poem.[31] Would not Jesus have been as well furnished in these things as James?

What was the character of James? All tradition testifies to his personal purity and persistent devotion, commanding the reverence and respect of all who knew him. As we trace the various elements of his character manifesting themselves in his anxieties and exhortations in this epistle, we find rising before us the image of Jesus as well as the portrait of James. He is a single-minded man, steadfast in faith and patient in trials. He is slow to wrath but very quick to detect any sins of speech and hypocrisy of life. He is full of humility but ready to champion the cause of the oppressed and the poor. He hates all insincerity and he loves wisdom, and he believes in prayer and practices it in reference to both temporal and spiritual good. He believes in absolute equality in the house of God. He is opposed to pew rents or anything else which will establish any distinctions between brethren in their places of worship.

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[31] Mayor, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

He believes in practical philanthropy. He believes that the right sort of religion will lead a man to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. A pure religion will mean a pure man. He believes that we ought to practice all we preach. As we study these characteristics and opinions of the younger brother does not the image of his and our Elder Brother grow ever clearer before our eyes?

PART III

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

I. The Apostle Peter

1. **A Likable Man.** Everybody liked Peter. Jesus liked him. His associates liked him. The early church liked him. We like him; because he is so much like us. Peter had neither Paul's head nor John's heart nor James' saintliness and stability; but we venture to say that he was at once the most heady and hearty and human of all the apostles. He gave so much clearer evidence of all the frailties which flesh and blood are heir to, and he was a so much better example of growth in grace than any or all of his associates.[1] If Paul ever grew in grace after his conversion, there is no very clear evidence of it either in his books or his biography, his letters or his life. As his theology seems to have been formulated once and for all after his return from Arabia, so his religious life seems to have maintained its high standard without wavering from the beginning to the end. John did grow in grace; but John always was one of those gifted, sensitive, intuitive natures who by virtue of their natural endowment stand apart from the common mass of men. On the contrary, Peter was so human, so like the rest of us in everything, that his history comes nearer our own and the glimpses we have of his spiritual experience seem like glimpses into the depths of our own hearts. His biography more easily than that of the other apostles can be rewritten as the Autobiography of the Common Man. Niemeyer said it long ago, "In Peter is more of human nature than in any other of the apostles."[2]

2. **A Hasty Man.** He was a heady, hasty man. Head-

[1] Compare Hayes, Great Characters of the New Testament, pp. 45–48.

[2] Niemeyer, Charakteristik der Bibel, 1830.

strong and headlong he went about the task set before him, without waiting to plan out methods of procedure and without any calculation of consequences. If Peter had lived in these days, he would have had an automobile as he went here and there and everywhere about his apostolic business, simply because he would have found it the most rapid means of locomotion in making a large number of short trips; and even after he had learned to manage the thing like a professional he would have been a public menace every day of his life, simply because of his failure to look ahead a little and his proneness to rush on, regardless of any obstacle in his way. No man ever had walked on the water before, but Peter jumped over the side of the boat to do it without stopping to think that it was impossible. The other disciples asked whether they should defend Jesus and, while they were asking, Peter had drawn his sword and struck off the right ear of the servant of the high priest.[3] Peter was the sort of man who would set the whole world on fire while some other people would be getting ready to light a match.[4] He went ahead and did the thing, and found out afterward whether it was according to orders or contrary to them.

He was a plunger in everything. He went in head over heels and he was careless enough oftentimes whether it was his head or simply his heels which directed his course for him. When John said that the resurrected Lord was standing on the beach, Peter could not wait for the slow progress of the ship dragging its heavy net. He plunged into the waters and waded or swam to the Master's side.[5] He knew that it was as much as his life was worth to draw his sword in the garden, but he never stopped to think of that. He knew that he was risking everything again when he alone of the fugitive band of disciples followed Jesus into the

[3] Luke 22. 49, 50.

[4] Compare Hayes, Great Characters of the New Testament, pp. 45, 46. [5] John 21. 7.

court of the trial. He was ready to take the plunge regardless of any personal consequences it might involve. He was reckless and rash to a degree. He had so little sense about some things that we all have a fellow-feeling for him.

(1) Peter was an impulsive and impetuous man. He was the creature of the moment. He acted without reflection. Did Jesus ask, "Who say ye that I am?" The others were ready to think about it a while and then more carefully and judicially to formulate a creed; but all of Peter's warm affection and admiration for his Lord surged forth like an outburst of the Old Faithful geyser in Yellowstone Park. He broke out in the first moment, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."[6] It was "the Great Confession," and it told the truth, and it won the warmest commendation of the Master. A few moments later Jesus was foretelling his sufferings and crucifixion for the first time; and Peter with the same impulsiveness burst out into hot remonstrance, "Be it far from thee, Lord: This shall never be unto thee."[7] Jesus probably knew what he was talking about, and if he were the Christ, the Son of the living God, who was Peter to take him to task and to rebuke him before all the disciples? Did he really believe his great confession or did he really think that he knew better than the Master did what ought to be and what would be? Yes, he believed all he had said about his Master, and he knew that the Master knew more and better than he; but he acted on the impulse of the moment and without thinking, as we so often do. He got his just deserts in "the Great Rebuke." Was any mortal ever more severely chastised in words than Peter was when Jesus said to him, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art a stumbling-block unto me: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men"?[8]

Impulsiveness sometimes leads to great achievement as in

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[6] Matt. 16. 16. [7] Matt. 16. 22. [8] Matt. 16. 23.

the great commendation which followed the great confession. On the other hand, it is just as likely to lead to great disaster as in the great rebuke which followed Peter's impetuous interference in the Master's affairs. Peter might be all right one moment and all wrong the next moment. His nature was something like that Sea of Galilee upon which he had spent his life as a fisherman, peaceful and placid in one hour and lashed into a sudden fury of tempest in another hour. You never could tell what was coming next with Peter. There was nothing tame or commonplace about him. He was as full of contradictions and inconsistencies as any of us. He always seemed to be in motion like a pendulum, reacting from one extreme to another.[9]

There was that miraculous draught of fishes. Peter and his partners had fished all night and caught nothing. In the morning with considerable disappointment he had come to the shore, and he was busily engaged in cleaning his nets when Jesus, accompanied by a great throng of people, drew near. He asked Peter for the loan of the fishing boat for a while. Peter gladly agreed and Jesus entered the boat and asked Peter to thrust out from the land a little. Then he took the boat end for a pulpit and sat there and preached a morning sermon. It was a sort of sunrise meeting, and the Lord Jesus was there; as he usually is when people get up that early to meet him. When the meeting was over and the congregation was dismissed the Lord seemed to feel that some obligation was upon him to repay Peter for the loan of the boat for the service. To feel that one good turn deserved another was just like him, and the payment of his obligation was just like him too, lavish, royal, overwhelming in its unexpectedness and its munificence. He said to Peter, "Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught."

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[9] Hayes, Great Characters of the New Testament, p. 47.

What a test of Peter's faith that command must have been! The Master might know more than Peter did about some things, and about most things, but Peter well might doubt whether he knew more about fishing. Peter knew that the fish were to be caught at night and not in the morning. Nobody ever fished in the sunshine. All the other fishermen would laugh at them if they saw them going out in the forenoon and dropping their nets in the deep water. The fish ran near the shore. His men were all tired out. The nets were just about clean again. It was the height of the ridiculous for a set of seasoned fishermen like them to follow such absurd directions from a man just out of a carpenter shop. That was Peter's first thought, and he felt like filing an instant remonstrance. "Master, we toiled all night, and took nothing: but at thy word I will let down the nets." The inconsistency of the reply marked the quick transition from remonstrance to obedience. The obedience was rewarded with so great a multitude of fishes that their nets were nigh to breaking.[10]

There was that last supper with the disciples, at which Jesus girded himself with a towel and made ready to wash the disciples' feet. When he came to Peter that hot-headed disciple said, "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?" When Jesus intimated that that was his intention, Peter roundly refused his permission. "Thou shalt never wash my feet." Then Jesus answered him, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." If Peter was not ready even yet to acknowledge that the Master knew better than he what was proper and right, the Master felt that he might as well give up on the spot. This was the end of all instruction and example. It was all right for Peter to feel humble but he must not be rebellious in his humility. It was all right for Peter to expostulate or remonstrate, but he must not overdo

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[10] Luke 5. 1–6.

the thing. He had had one experience of that kind at Cæsarea Philippi. Would he have another here? Matthew Henry says, "There is an overdoing as well as an underdoing, and sometimes such an overdoing as amounts to an undoing." The Master said, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." That would be Peter's undoing indeed! With impulsive reaction Peter rushes to the other extreme. He said, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." That was about as far from the even balance of propriety as the other statement had been; but Peter meant it all right and Jesus forgave him.[11]

It was to this impulsive and impetuous disciple that Jesus gave the vision afterward on the housetop at Joppa, and Peter, without taking any advice from the authorities at Jerusalem concerning any such radical departure, went in hot haste down to Cæsarea and admitted a Gentile into the church without any other preliminary than the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They called Peter to task about it afterward and wanted to know what he meant by such a high-handed and unheard-of procedure; and all Peter could say was, "God granted me such a vision. God gave the Holy Spirit to them even as he gave the like gift to us in the beginning. Who was I that I could withstand God?"[12] One wonders whether anyone else in that whole apostolic company would have been capable of any such instant, impulsive, unhesitating obedience to such a startling command. Peter had learned his lesson at last. His first impulse now was to do the thing the Master commanded regardless of any consequences which might follow to himself. That impulse was a safe one, and it made him the natural leader of the infant church.

(2) Peter was as hasty in speech as he was in action. He often talked without thinking, like the rest of us. He never

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[11] John 13. 1–10. [12] Acts 11. 4–16.

could brook either silence or inaction. He always was in favor of going ahead and saying something, and, like the rest of us, he often found out afterward rather than before whether he had been going ahead on the right road or the wrong one and whether he had been talking arrant nonsense or perfect wisdom. Peter spoke first on many an occasion, not because he arrogated to himself any superior enlightenment on the matter in hand nor because he desired to be the recognized spokesman or head of the apostolic company, but simply because he could not endure any pause in the proceedings. If in the first moment of silence no one else had found anything to say, then Peter might be relied upon to burst in with an expression of sublime truth or most profound falsehood; and it always was a question which it would be. He might win the Master's highest commendation or he might deserve and get the Master's severest rebuke. He never stopped to consider which it would be likely to be. He said his say, and then waited to see. The scene at the great confession and the scene at the feet-washing are in evidence.

We put alongside those incidents the transfiguration experience on the mountaintop. We read that the three disciples were awe-struck by that phenomenon, and even Peter knew not what to say; but that never was a reason for Peter not to say anything. When he did not know what to say he opened his mouth and began to talk. We can only imagine what nonsense a man might be capable of in such circumstances. Nothing could have been more absurd than Peter's suggestion at that moment. "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three booths; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah." What did that mean? "We are having a good time here together, and so suppose we prolong our stay," or "The air is cold here on the mountain-top, and so suppose we build three shelters from the night wind as a safeguard against rheumatism."

Whatever it meant, and it may have meant nothing at all either to Peter who uttered it or to the others who heard it, the evangelist rather apologizes for its utter inanity and the narrative takes no further notice of it but goes on to record that a voice came out of the cloud suggesting that Jesus was God's beloved Son and it would be the part of wisdom to hear him rather than to be making random speeches out of an empty head, as Peter had.[13]

To the hasty speech of Peter at the time of the great confession and at the time of the feet-washing and at the time of the transfiguration we add his hasty expostulation when the Master foretold that all the disciples would be offended and scattered abroad. Peter made instant denial, "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I." Then Jesus told him that he would deny his Master three times before the next morning, and Peter burst into exceedingly vehement asseveration of his unfailing and unquestionable loyalty, "If I must die with thee, I will not deny thee."[14] He meant it and he was sure about it. The next day he knew that it had been a hasty and inconsiderate speech.

Jesus had sent the young ruler away sorrowful, and Peter said to him, "Lo, we have left all, and followed thee; what then shall we have?" It was a selfish question and there was a tinge of vulgarity and bargain-seeking in it. If Peter had taken time to think twice before speaking, he probably never would have asked such a question at such a time; and we never would have had the generous promise of the hundred-fold reward which Jesus made in reply.[15]

We have pointed out elsewhere[16] how Peter was amazed at the wonder-working power displayed by the Lord in the miraculous draught of fishes, and how in all probability he never was more determined to cleave to this new Master through sunshine and storm. Yet what does he do? He

[13] Mark 9. 2–7. [14] Mark 14. 27–31. [15] Matt. 19. 27–29.
[16] The Synoptic Gospels and the Book of Acts, p. 225.

falls at the knees of Jesus. That was all right, but what does he say? The most foolish and inexplicable thing. He cries, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."[17] It would have been more becoming for Peter to depart, if anybody had to leave, than for him to order the Master to depart from him. It was the height of presumption for a sinful man to take it upon himself to give orders to the sinless Lord. How could Jesus depart from him, anyway? They were out in deep water in a boat. It was not convenient for anyone to leave that boat just at that moment. Moreover, Peter really did not wish for Jesus to depart from him. He was talking without thinking. It was all utterly foolish and inexcusable, just as the psychological processes of such a mind as Peter's so often are. It was another exhibition of Peter's capacity along the line of hasty and impulsive speech.

Jesus had said to the disciples in the upper room, "Whither I go, ye cannot come." Then he had gone on to talk about the new commandment of love; but Peter's curiosity had been aroused and when he could endure it no longer he interrupted the Master's speech and harked back to that more interesting point, "Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, whither goest thou?" Jesus assured him again that he could not follow now, and Peter questioned again, "Lord, why cannot I follow thee even now? I will lay down my life for thee."[18]

The resurrected Jesus was having that farewell talk with Peter alone on the shore of the sea of Galilee, and Peter saw John following and his curiosity overcame his courtesy again and he interrupted with the question, "Lord, and what shall this man do?" Jesus gently rebuked him. "What *is that* to thee? follow thou me."[19] It was the last occasion, as far as we know, in which Jesus and Peter had any

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[17] Luke 5. 8. [18] John 13. 36, 37. [19] John 21. 21, 22.

private conversation together, and Jesus had to rebuke Peter again and for the last time for his besetting sin.

(3) Naturally enough, Peter was a man given to hyperbole. Hasty and unconsidered speech is likely to be extravagant in its statement. In the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus, when he was attracting general attention by his cures, we read that all the city was gathered together at his door in the evening. Very early on the next morning Jesus arose and went out into the desert places to pray. Simon and those who were with him organized a search party at once and went after their fugitive teacher and healer. We can imagine the eagerness of their search, and when they had located Jesus in some remote and secluded spot where he had hoped to be uninterrupted for a time at least, we can imagine how Peter would rush into his presence at the head of the intruding column with the half-apologetic and half-boastful statement, "All are seeking thee."[20]

The statement was not even half-true. Probably only a small company were in that searching party. Even if all the city people who had stayed at home and yet were interested in the result of the search were to be included in Peter's thought, what a comparatively small number of people that still would be! The most of the people in the province never had heard of Jesus thus far. The nation was sublimely unconscious of his existence as yet. The empire never would hear of him in life or in death. Yet Peter is ready to make that sweeping statement, "All men are seeking thee!" All men? Possibly fifty men were seeking him, and fifty million men were not. Peter would not consider that fact. He knew that many men were seeking Jesus and hyperbolically he stretched the "many" into "all."

After that last long discourse with the disciples they ex-

[20] Mark 1. 32–37.

pressed their satisfaction with the plainness of the speech of Jesus, "Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb," and we can imagine that it was Peter who went farther than the rest in his hyperbolical fashion and added, "Now know we that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee."[21] The passage has been quoted as a proof passage for the omniscience of Jesus. It proves nothing but the tendency of Peter and possibly of the other disciples as well to be hyperbolical in the expressions of their confidence in Jesus. Jesus was not omniscient. He tells us of one thing he did not know. He asked questions in order to find out many other things. When Peter and the disciples said, "Thou knowest all things," they were stretching the truth as much as when they told Jesus there in the beginning, "All men are seeking thee." "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I."[22] That was the way Peter talked; but it did not follow that what he so confidently asserted was true. The Master told him plainly when he made that boast that what he said was not true and another morning would prove it.

3. **A Going Man.** Peter was a man who always was in motion. He never could sit still very long at a time. He always wanted to be up and doing something. He always wanted to be up and going somewhere. During the forty days after the resurrection, when the disciples were waiting for the promised appearance of the risen Lord in Galilee, we read that Peter said, "I go a fishing."[23] Peter could not sit around with folded hands and wait for anything. He would go about his ordinary business and wait for the summons to meet his Lord while his hands and his feet were kept busy. It has been said that Peter was a "going" man and John was a "knowing" one. It is a good characterization.

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[21] John 16. 29, 30. [22] Mark 14. 29. [23] John 21. 3.

When the disciples there at the Last Supper wanted some information, through Peter, their spokesman, they applied to John to get it. John always was nearest the great Teacher, and John knew him best. He was the beloved disciple and he was the loving disciple; and love begets insight and gives intuition. When they were fishing in the morning mist and the Stranger appeared on the shore and told them where they could find all the fish they could handle, John peered through the sea-fog and strained his eyes to make out that strange form on the beach until the glad certainty of conviction sprang up within him that it was the Lord himself. When he knew it he told Peter. When Peter heard it he went to the Lord through the sea.[24] *John knows first; Peter goes first.* That was a characteristic difference between them.

When the women first had come to the disheartened and despairing disciple group after the crucifixion with their strange news of a resurrection appearance of the Lord, we read that the words of the women seemed to them as idle tales and they believed them not. However, unbelief never would seem to Peter a valid reason for inaction. We read that Peter "arose and ran unto the tomb" to find out for himself what foundation there might be for such wild reports.[25] John followed Peter and being the younger man, outran him and came first to the tomb. There John stopped at the entrance, overcome with surprise or with awe. Impetuous Peter came puffing after, and without any thought of restraining reverence of any kind he rushed past John into the empty tomb. There the two disciples saw the same things, but of John we read that he saw and believed. He knew the significance of these things first. Peter was simply bewildered by them, while John thought his way through and came at the truth. Peter goes first into the tomb. John follows and knows first what that empty tomb meant.[26]

[24] John 21. 7. [25] Luke 24. 8–12. [26] John 20. 3–8.

The other disciples waited on the ship to welcome the Master that night when he came walking to them through the storm; but Peter scrambled over the side of the vessel as soon as he was convinced that this was no ghost, and he walked away across the water to grasp the Master's hand. He did it without thinking. As soon as he had time to think he began to sink.[27]

When Jesus told the disciples that he was going away from them, and they could not follow him when he went, Peter's warm affection and impetuous zeal could not endure the thought of any delay, and he said, "Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thee."[28] The Lord had said that he could follow afterward, but that did not satisfy Peter. If he were going to follow at all, he was in favor of following right away. That was the first impulse with Peter, to go at the thing and get it done. It might be the wrong thing to do, but Peter would rather be doing something, even if it were the wrong thing. He was not willing to wait, even when the Master gave him explicit directions to do so.

That is apparent again in the ten days before Pentecost. The Lord had told the disciples to wait the promise of the Father, and they were waiting in the upper room together in prayer. In those days Peter stood up and said, "Brethren, we do not seem to be getting anywhere in this prayer meeting. I think it is time that we were doing something. Let us transact a little business. Suppose we elect a successor to Judas. We will have that much accomplished, no matter what else may happen later." It was rank disobedience. The Master had told them to wait, and Peter was not willing to wait. Anything else would be easier for him than that. His impatience led the disciples into the great blunder of electing Matthias to the place in which Jesus put the

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[27] Matt. 14. 28–31. [28] John 13. 36, 37.

apostle Paul later when he was ready to make the appointment which Peter was disposed to take out of his hands. Peter was not bashful. He seemed to be willing to assume superiority to his Lord on more than one occasion. It frequently happens that the more thoughtless a man is the more he prides himself upon his own good judgment.

Peter never lacked in self-confidence. He was a constitutional blunderer in the beginning, always going ahead and headlong; but he was so hearty about everything that you could forgive him. He blundered heartily and repented heartily, and you could forgive him heartily. He made such a splendid dash at everything. He might be utterly mistaken in his thinking, but his motives always were the best. He would have charged with the Light Brigade at Balaklava; and if he had been the commanding officer, he would have been likely to order the charge and to see the next minute that it was all a blunder.[29] Jesus rebuked Peter again and again, and yet he always liked him. Paul rebuked Peter to his very face, and yet he must have had a sincere affection for the man, so blustering and blundering and at the same time so loyal and so sincere. When he repented Jesus forgave him and Paul forgave him and everybody else forgave him. Luther once said, "Whenever I look at Peter, my very heart leaps for joy. If I could paint a portrait of Peter, I would paint upon every hair of his head, 'I believe in the forgiveness of sins.' "

Why was it that everybody could forgive Peter so readily? Because they realized that his faults were not radically faults at heart. His head might go wrong, but his heart never did. He might seem to be like Reuben, "unstable as water," but that was only on the surface of his character. Nothing is more stable than the ocean depths; and Peter was not a man who was all surface and no depth. Down deep in his na-

[29] Compare Hayes, Great Characters of the New Testament, pp. 47, 48.

ture there was the abiding loyalty and right purpose which endeared him to all. His friends might mourn over his indiscretions and be sure that Peter never would get over them, and yet they would love him all the time, for at bottom Peter was all right. He was easily agitated, easily roused to action and speech, easily swayed now in one direction and now in another, impulsive and inconsistent; but his anchor always held. He always came around all right in the end.

He was not shallow. There was plenty of good stuff in him. He had a deal of stamina, and no one ever questioned his devotion to Jesus at any point. With an excessive amount of mental mobility and an utterly irrepressible amount of nervous energy which would not permit him to be either silent or still and which kept his tongue wagging and his feet in perpetual motion Peter was strong in his love for Jesus. That saved him from shipwreck through rashness. That brought him safely through all the twisting currents of his superficial life to a safe harbor at last. Impulsiveness and impetuosity of action and speech were characteristic of Peter, but there was a more fundamental characteristic, and that was Peter's steadfast adherence to Jesus and allegiance to his cause.

4. **A Loyal Man.** Peter's devotion was unfailing. His love was lasting. His loyalty never was lost. Even when it seemed most apparent that Peter was lacking in the reverence and the love which were due to his Lord, at heart he meant it all right. It was his love which prompted his most foolish conduct as well as his most noble behavior. There is no mystery about Peter. We never may be able to tell beforehand what Peter is likely to do, but when he has done it we see at once that the key to his conduct is to be found in his love for his Master. Peter loved everybody who was good. He loved his wife, and she was ready to leave her comfortable home and follow Peter in his itinerant and missionary labors in his later life. He loved his mother-

in-law, and when she was sick with a fever Peter joined with the other disciples in asking Jesus to heal her. He loved John, and John was his faithful satellite during all the period covered by the Gospels and the book of Acts.

He loved Jesus with a greater love than anyone else ever had roused within his passionate soul. He left all to follow him. He loved him fervently, intensely, without reservation. He was ever on the stretch to prove his devotion. That makes the pathos of the Master's appeal there in the Garden of Gethsemane all the more poignant. He came from his agony of prayer and found the three favorite disciples sleeping; and he does not seem to have thought it strange in James or in John, but he singles out Peter and says to him, "Simon, sleepest thou? couldest thou not watch one hour?"[80] He had been so sure of Peter's unfailing fidelity. It was a last and added pang to find even Peter asleep in this hour of his need. Peter always had loved him, and he had come to rely upon the generous expression of his sympathy. It had been a comfort to him so many times.

Even when he had tried to bully the Lord out of his prophecy of Calvary it had been because of his love for his Master. He could not endure the thought of his suffering and rejection. It was his generosity and his devotion which prompted his hasty speech. It was his loyalty and his human affection which would ward off all danger from the Lord and insofar as that desire to save the Master from all suffering was contrary to the will of God, it savored of the things of men and not of the things of God and it represented the spirit of Satan himself. It had to be sharply rebuked by Jesus, and yet Jesus recognized that it was only a manifestation of mistaken love on Peter's part, and he never loved Peter any the less but rather the more because

[80] Mark 14. 37.

of it. Peter had not turned traitor to the Lord all in a moment. He loved Jesus just as much when he was rebuking the Master as when he was uttering the great confession. It was his love which led him to both speeches. The one was a happy inspiration and the other was a hideous blunder; but they were both born of his hot-headed and hot-hearted love.

It seems to us that the same thing is true of the great denial in the high priest's hall. We are fain to believe that Peter's heart was loyal and right all through that trying experience. He lied three times in denying his Lord and declaring that he did not belong to his company, and he fell to cursing finally; but was it not his love which prompted the falsehood and the emphatic asseveration? Did it not seem to Peter that he might prevaricate and swear a little rather than be thrust out from his Master's presence? What business was it of these inquisitive servants anyway whether he was a follower of Jesus or not? It would be better to deceive them for a moment than to appear to desert the Lord here in the hands of his enemies.

We easily can understand how this was the first quick impulse of Peter's heartfelt devotion and that it seemed all right to him until the Master turned and looked upon him and Peter saw in the reproach of the Master's eyes that it would be far better for him to be separated from Jesus by bodily expulsion than that he should be separated from him spiritually by lying and swearing. Then when he went out into the dark where he could see nothing but the reproach in the Master's eyes all the time he began to realize for the first time, and then more and more fully as the hours went by, that he had indeed fulfilled the Master's prophecy concerning him and had denied him before men and within his own hearing, and the strong man broke down into passionate weeping and most hearty repentance for his actual, if unpremeditated and unintentional sin. Peter did not betray

his Lord as Judas did; and he did not commit suicide as Judas did in consequence of his heartless sin. Peter denied on the moment's impulse only, and as soon as he had had time to think, his heart was grieved and he repented bitterly.

He was sure of one thing, that his love to Jesus never had failed, and Jesus was just as sure of it as he. There on the seashore in Galilee he had Peter repeat three times his profession of love, so that Peter might have the consolation forever that his threefold denial had been wiped out by his threefold confession of loyalty. Augustine said of it, "Be not sad, Apostle: answer once, answer twice, answer thrice; let confession conquer thrice in love, as presumption was conquered thrice in fear; that must be thrice loosed which thou hast thrice bound." It was even so. Peter fell back upon the assertion, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."[31] That was all he could say, but that covered his whole case. Jesus knew that Peter loved him all the time. His head so often was at fault and therefore his tongue and his feet and his hands and his whole body went wrong, but his spirit was true and his heart was all right. If he was a blunderbuss, it was because he was made that way. He intended to go straight all the time. With all his blundering he was so faithful and so loyal that the Lord made *him,* not James nor John nor Paul, the founder of his church.

5. A Rock Man. Peter was the rock apostle of the early church. He was not a perfect man. He was full of faults. Possibly a perfect man would not have served the purpose of the Lord so well as Peter did there in the beginning. It is something to be thankful for that the moving spirit in the founding of the Christian Church was not some paragon whose immaculate conduct and unimpeachable career might have been depressing or discouraging to all of us weak mor-

[31] John 21. 17.

tals who have followed him. Peter was so heady and hasty and human in both his good qualities and his faults that we always have been able to see in him just what Christianity could do for honest but erring men. He had a sanguine temperament, and he might be led astray for a moment, and he might seem to be fickle and inconsistent, but at the bottom of his character there was the bed-rock of an unflinching faith in the Master and an unfailing loyalty to him. That was the only foundation upon which the church could be built.

Jesus saw this characteristic in Peter at their first meeting at the Jordan when Andrew brought his brother to the Lord as the newly discovered Messiah. "Jesus looked upon him, and said, Thou art Simon the son of John," or Jonas or Jonah: "thou shalt be called Cephas (which is by interpretation, Peter)"[32] or Rock or Stone. There may be a play upon words here. Jonah means "a dove," and the Master may have suggested in this collocation of proper names the mixture of elements in Peter's character. "Thou art the son of the gentle and shrinking Dove, but thou shalt be the Rock in which the Dove dwells. Thou son of the Dove of the Rock, become henceforth the Rock of the Dove. Out of thy weakness be made strong; and be thou a tower of strength to thy brethren, even as the cliff in which the dove makes its nest is its sure defense from all its foes." There is a mixture of dovelikeness and of clifflikeness in Peter, but it is the rough and ready strength of the man which predominates. So Jesus named him "The Rock," that his very name might symbolize his strength.

Peter first made the great confession and Jesus approved him for it and declared that upon this rock he would build his church.[33] At the close of the ministry he foretold Peter's failure, but said to him that when he was converted he would rely upon him to strengthen the brethren.[34] At

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[32] John 1. 42. [33] Matt. 16. 18. [34] Luke 22. 32.

Pentecost Peter was the spokesman, and under the hot flood of his eloquence three thousand souls were swept into the church in one day. Peter opened the door of the Christian Church to Cornelius and other uncircumcised Gentiles. He was the leader in the beginning.

He himself was a sample of the thoroughgoing transformation wrought at Pentecost. He was capable of a whole-hearted surrender to the Christ and his cause, and he was outspoken enough and emotional enough to impart something of his loyalty and energy to others. That beginning work might not have been done so well by a rabbi or a seer or a philosopher or a theologian, but Peter was so hearty and so human that he won sympathy both for himself and for his Master wherever he went. Peter did his work well. The church was well founded. Peter may have been eclipsed by Paul in the later days, but he had the advantage of Paul in being in at the start. It was honor enough for him that the Master had chosen him and his confession to be the rock upon which the church should be built.

It is not necessary to claim for him the added and unreliable honor of being the first pope at Rome. That cannot be proved either from the New Testament or from the tradition of the church. "Let us imagine that we had read in the New Testament that Peter had been mastered by an irresistible conviction that it was his duty to go to Rome; that he had persevered in the design till he accomplished it; that previously he had addressed to the Roman Christians the longest and most elaborate exposition of Christian doctrine which we possess in the Sacred Volume; that when at Rome he had from that place, as from a great center, addressed authoritative epistles to other churches; that he had represented himself as weighed down with the care of all the churches; that he had exercised excommunication; that he had asserted his authority and magnified his office in the

strongest language; that he had sent his legates, with full power to act for him; that he had given peremptory commands regarding social duties and public worship; that he, and he only, had written pastoral letters respecting the duties of the clergy—if these things had been read in the New Testament concerning Peter, we might be ready to listen to those who asserted that Peter had been made pope of the church in Rome. "These things, and other things such as these, are written in the New Testament; but they are written concerning Paul, not concerning Peter."[35]

We could show better reason for believing that Paul was pope than that Peter was pope. Neither of them ever was pope or ever thought of any such thing. It was sufficient for each of these men that they were chosen vessels of the Lord and apostles of the early church. The Lord could get along with Peter better than Paul could. Under the Lord's loving tuition Peter is one of the best examples of growth in grace to be found in the Scriptures or in the history of the church, and that again makes him doubly interesting to us.

6. A Growing Man. Peter improved with old age. His sanguine temperament and his impetuous spirits cooled down a little through the years. His ardor and his devotion remained, but they were not so liable to hasty and ill-considered manifestations. As Peter was a going man he was a growing man as well. He grew in grace as long as he lived. The horizon widened before him until he could see as far as the apostle Paul. If on one occasion he forgot his heaven-taught catholicity, he did not forget his heaven-wrought humility. When Paul rebuked him he repented as readily as when the Lord rebuked him, and, taught by sad experience as we so often are, thenceforth he was steady in his adherence to the Petrine-Pauline principles upon which the Chris-

[35] Howson, Horae Petrinæ, p. 95.

tian Church was founded. Is there a more rounded and symmetrically strong character in that church than the apostle Peter of whom we get glimpses in the First Epistle and in the later church tradition?[36]

Paul will have nothing to do with that backslider John Mark. He will part company with Barnabas rather than keep company with him. Peter feels a bond of sympathy with such fickleness. He searches John Mark out, deals with him gently, brings him back into the ministry, where ever after he is Peter's "son." Peter was more willing to strengthen the weak brethren than Paul was. Had not the Lord said to him, "Feed my lambs"? All through the book of Acts he is the obedient undershepherd of the flock, an acknowledged leader among his brethren but never arrogating any undue authority to himself. He is courteous and courageous, humble and brave, obedient to God rather than to hostile men, dignified among his enemies and among his peers, the same old Peter and yet so changed for the better that his very presence and abiding experience were constant recommendation of the faith he professed. The impetuous and impulsive disciple had become an example of patience to the flock. The richness of his Christian character was a proof of what Christianity could do for the weakest and poorest material. It was an encouragement to all to believe that when Satan had sifted them as he did Peter there might be something of the same rich result in their lives. Longfellow has put that encouragement into verse, written not long before his death.

"In St. Luke's Gospel we are told
How Peter, in the days of old,
Was sifted;
And now, though ages intervene,
Sin is the same, while time and scene
Are shifted.

[36] Compare Hayes, Great Characters of the New Testament, p. 49.

"Satan desires us, great and small,
As wheat to sift us; and we all
Are tempted.
Not one, however rich or great,
Is by his station or estate
Exempted.

"For all at last the cock will crow,
Who hear the warning voice and go
Unheeding,
Till thrice and more they have denied
The Man of Sorrows, crucified
And bleeding.

"One look of that pale suffering face
Will make us feel the deep disgrace
Of weakness;
We shall be sifted till the strength
Of self-conceit be changed at length
To meekness."

It was done for Peter. It may be done for any man.

7. **The Apostle of Hope.** Peter believed that there was hope for everybody, for there had been hope for him. It is a characteristic of all his later days, this "pure and beautiful Christian optimism." He is largely responsible for our modern gospel of the larger hope. His heart was big enough to hope for anything; and when his head was steadied by the spirit of a sound understanding, he was worthy to write to the universal church those invaluable exhortations to humility and confidence, soberness and vigilance which would establish, strengthen, settle it until through sufferings it, like himself, had been made perfect in Christ.

8. **A Pen Portrait of Peter.** Can we form any picture now of the apostle whom Jesus chose to be one of his favorite three? He was a man in middle life, whose wife's mother was still vigorous enough to minister to a company of guests as soon as she was relieved of her fever. She may

have been an old woman, but her son-in-law probably was in his prime. The Lord could speak to him of the time when he was young and in the same sentence prophesy what would happen to him when he was old.[37] He was a sun-burned and horny-handed man, used to hard physical labor. He was a fisherman, inured to all kinds of wind and weather. He was liable to sudden tempests of passion, and when his self-control was lost he could swear with the best of them. He had all the billingsgate of the fish market at his tongue's end. Yet he was a generous-hearted man, always ready to help anyone in distress; and everybody knew that if he did anyone an injury in his temper, he would do all he could to more than make up for it when his anger was gone.

He was not a man of very delicate feeling, a little coarse in manner and in language sometimes. Yet he was a simple soul, capable of intense devotion, and at bottom all right. Everybody believed in his fundamental sincerity and everybody liked him. Most people were ready to give him his head, knowing that if he got on a wrong course it would be a short one and he would come around all right in the end. He was reasonably well to do. He was a partner in a firm which had a sufficient number of hired servants to leave the whole business with them, all the ships and all the nets, while he followed the Master. He was a householder and a man of some standing in the community. Withal he was a rough and ready, hasty, heady, hearty, human, hopeful, lovable sort of man, a natural leader of men and a leader who would be loved by all who came to know him intimately.

He was something of an orator. He had had plenty of practice in plain speech. His tongue seldom was silent and neither his brain nor his feet nor his hands were quiet for any considerable length of time. If his heart could be cap-

[37] John 21. 18.

tured and all this superabundant energy could be enlisted in the cause of the Christian Church, what an acquisition that would be! He would have to be trained and disciplined and sifted and sanctified, and then after years of self-control he never would be quite safe from backsliding, but what a tower of strength he would be in the meantime to all who came in contact with him! There would be something doing wherever he came, and it would be doing without any delay.

The Lord chose Peter to found his church after Pentecost, and after Pentecost Peter was a saint with some faults and a saint liable to err on some occasions, but, after all, a saint worthy to stand at the head of the forming church as a supreme example of the transforming power it proclaimed to all men. Over against that Peter of the Gospels and the book of Acts we set the Peter of the First Epistle, and the contrast is most striking. Can we imagine him as he looks at the time of the writing of these words? He is an old man now. His hair is gray and his physical strength has abated. He is no longer dashing impetuously about at his tasks. He has something of the dignity of his years. He is patient with all, desirous of peace with all, devoted to all. He is a patriarch with an honorable record behind him. He has been true to the Master whom he loved through all the years. He is as true to-day as ever he was. He would have all men come into the same blessed fealty and share with him its present joys and future rewards. It is with that end in view that he writes. What sort of an epistle would such a man as Peter be likely to write? Surely so strong a personality would make its own characteristics apparent in any product of its pen. We shall look at the epistle to see what traces of the chastened personality of Peter it may bear.

II. Peter's Personality in the Epistle

Many people read the First Epistle of Peter without any thought of the author as they read it. It might have been

written by Paul or James or Jude or John or anyone else as far as they are concerned. It might have been written by a machine rather than by a man as far as their interest goes. They read the epistle only to know what is said in it, and they have no care as to who said it or why he said it as he did. As a consequence they lose half or more than half of its message. They might hear a living voice in these pages. They might come face to face with a living man and a man well worth knowing; for he was one of the most conspicuous members of that company of the primitive apostles whose writings and teachings have turned the world upside down.

This letter is written by a man who lived with Jesus and who listened to Jesus and who learned from Jesus the words of everlasting life. Everything which he heard and saw through the three years of the ministry of Jesus helped to prepare him for the writing of this message. Some sayings of Jesus were addressed directly to him and in some of the gospel incidents he was especially prominent. It would be interesting if we found touches in this epistle which suggest these sayings and these incidents; for as we read them we can feel sure that Peter had them in mind as he wrote and so we have all the flood of light which they can throw upon his meaning. It surely is worth while to search for these traces of the personality and the experiences of Peter in the epistle and we find that it is teeming full of them.

1. Let us look first at the most *Petrine* passage in the epistle, "The Lord is gracious: unto whom coming, a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God, elect, precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Because it is contained in scripture,

> Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious:
> And he that believeth on him shall not be put to shame.

For you therefore that believe is the preciousness: but for such as disbelieve,

The stone which the builders rejected,
The same was made the head of the corner;

and,

A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense."[38]

Πέτρα σκανδάλου! If there had been no superscription to this epistle, and if no church tradition had come down to us concerning its authorship, would we not almost feel warranted in saying at once that no one but Peter would have been likely to write these words? It is the rock apostle who rings the changes upon Christ the living stone, the chief corner stone, the stone rejected of the builders, the stone of stumbling and the rock of offense, and upon Christians as living stones built up into a spiritual house. It all goes back to that crowning moment of his career, that moment of the great confession when the Master had said to him, "Thou art *Petros* and upon this *petra* I will build my church,"[39] and then almost immediately afterward the Master had rebuked him, saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art a stumbling-block [skandalon] unto me."[40] Those two Greek words, *petra* and *skandalon,* must have burned themselves into Peter's memory; and here they are side by side in his epistle, *πέτρα σκανδάλου*, a rock of offense. Jesus had said that Peter was a rock and he also had said that Peter was an offense. If he was both, then he was a rock of offense! That was a title which Isaiah had given to the Christ! Did Peter feel that in appropriating these two titles to himself he was through this prophetic passage linked all the more closely to his Lord? At any rate, this imagery of the building stone seems to have taken deep hold on his mind.

[38] 1 Pet. 2. 4–8. [39] Matt. 16. 18. [40] Matt. 16. 23.

He had heard the Master say to the Jews, "Did ye never read in the scriptures,

> The stone which the builders rejected,
> The same was made the head of the corner?"[41]

Peter remembered that quotation from the Scriptures which seemed to give to the Master the same name which the Master had given to him, and when after Pentecost he stood before the rulers and elders and scribes to make defense of his faith he told them of Jesus, "He is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders, which was made the head of the corner."[42] Here, again, in the epistle he quotes the words, and thus through Peter these words of the hundred and eighteenth psalm are to be found in the Gospels and the book of Acts and the Epistles and bind these several portions of the New Testament into unity of testimony at this point. Jesus was a rock and Peter was a rock, and they both were living men. Stones were dead, but there were such things as living stones.

Peter always was interested supremely in life. In the great confession he had called Jesus the Son of the *living* God.[43] Before the people gathered at the Beautiful Gate of the temple Peter had called Jesus "the Prince of *life*."[44] When other disciples went back and walked no more with Jesus, Peter said to him, "Thou hast the words of eternal *life*."[45] He begins this epistle with the words, "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a *living* hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."[46] He tells husbands and wives that they are "joint heirs of the grace of *life*."[47] In this passage he calls the Lord a living stone and then says that all Christians are living stones in the

[41] Matt. 21. 42. [42] Acts 4. 11.
[43] Matt. 16. 16. [44] Acts 3. 15. [45] John 6. 68.
[46] 1 Pet. 1. 3. [47] 1 Pet. 3. 7.

spiritual house prepared for the acceptable worship of God. The emphasis upon life, the collocation of the two terms "rock" and "offense," and the reiteration of the image of the corner stones and the building stones all mark this passage as one from the pen of Peter, the rock apostle, and they all carry us back to the incidents recorded in the sixteenth chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew for their origin and inspiration.

2. In the next chapter in the Gospel according to Matthew, the seventeenth, we find at its close the account of another incident which Peter must have remembered with greater distinctness than anyone else, since he was principally concerned in it. The collectors of the temple tax came to Peter and said, "Doth not your teacher pay the half-shekel?" Peter said "Yes" without a moment's hesitation. He spoke without thinking, as usual. Of course his Master would pay the tax. He always had paid the tax, and every good Jew always paid the tax. So Peter said "Yes" at once. Then when he got to thinking he was not so sure about it. Jesus had paid the tax, but that was before he had been acknowledged as the Messiah. That acknowledgment might change the whole situation. He thought it would be well to ask Jesus himself about it. When he entered the house for that purpose Jesus anticipated him with a statement which confirmed his fears that he had been hasty in his assertion. Jesus said to him, "What thinkest thou, Simon? The kings of the earth, from whom do they receive toll or tribute? From their sons or from strangers? And when he said, From strangers, Jesus said unto him, Therefore the sons are free."[48] Sure enough! Peter had just told Jesus that he recognized in him the Son of the living God. Then the Son would not need to pay taxes for the support of the Father's worship in the temple.

[48] Matt. 17. 25, 26.

Why had not Peter thought of that? It was so often embarrassing to talk without thinking. Here was another instance in point. Poor Peter was still smarting under the sting of the Master's rebuke for his hasty speech. Now he evidently was in for it again.

What a relief it must have been to him when the Master went on to say: "It is all true that we are free; and if we stood upon our rights, we need not pay this temple tax. Nevertheless, that we may not give offense to the authorities we will be subject to their ordinances and pay them all they ask." Peter never would forget the lesson of that day. We think of it as we read in this epistle, "Be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as sent by him for vengeance on evildoers and for praise to them that do well. For so is the will of God, that by well-doing ye should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your freedom for a cloak of wickedness, but as bond-servants of God. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king."[49] Is not this the lesson which Peter had learned there at Capernaum? "We are free, but it is not necessary to assert our freedom over against the ordinances of men. It is better to be subject to them for the Lord's sake."

3. We turn to the next chapter in the Gospel according to Matthew, the eighteenth, and we find another word of Jesus addressed directly to Peter. Jesus had been talking to the disciples on the general subject of church discipline and he had told them how to deal with faulty brethren. Practical Peter broke into the discourse with a question. He said, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? until seven times?" That was the sacred number among the Jews. Probably Peter thought

[49] 1 Pet. 2. 13–17.

that three times would be sufficient and seven times would be extravagant enough to suit even the most exacting of the religionists. He scarcely could imagine himself forgiving a brother so many times as that, and surely he never would without relieving his mind as to that brother's shortcomings in the most emphatic manner. We can imagine Peter's surprise when Jesus said to him, "I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, until seventy times seven." Then followed the parable of the unforgiving servant who was forgiven until he took his fellow-servant by the throat and who then was delivered to the tormentors until he had paid all that was due.[50] That was one of the most vivid of the Lord's parables. Peter never forgot it. Here in his old age he writes, "Finally, be ye all likeminded, compassionate, loving as brethren, tender-hearted, humble-minded: not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but contrariwise blessing,[51] . . . above all things being fervent in your love among yourselves; for love covereth a multitude of sins."[52] Here is the doctrine of unlimited forgiveness which Peter had learned from the Lord. We put the incident and the parable of the Gospel behind these passages in the epistle and we find in them added force and beauty of meaning.

4. We turn to the next chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew, the nineteenth, and we find another one of Peter's questions answered by the Lord. Jesus had sent the rich young ruler away and he had talked to the disciples about the great peril of riches; and then we read that Peter answered and said to him, "Lo, we have left all, and followed thee; what then shall we have?"[53] Peter was practical above all things. As we have suggested, he was lacking a little in fineness of feeling. There was something which must have been more or less offensive to the sensitive

[50] Matt. 18. 21–35. [51] 1 Pet. 3. 8, 9.
[52] 1 Pet. 4. 8. [53] Matt. 19. 27.

soul of Jesus in this coarse suggestion of the necessity of an adequate reward for all their sacrifice in his behalf. He answered the question gently and generously enough, but it must have hurt him nevertheless. He said: "Peter, you shall have an adequate reward. You shall be repaid an hundredfold. You shall wear a crown and sit upon a throne in eternal life." Here in the epistle Peter recalls this promise and he writes to the elect that God hath begotten them "unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven"[54] for them, and that "when the chief Shepherd shall be manifested," they "shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away."[55]

5. There is one very peculiar expression in this epistle. There are many peculiar expressions, but there is one which cannot be paralleled in the Septuagint or in the Apocrypha or in classical Greek before Peter's time. He says, "Yea, all of you gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another."[56] The Greek *ταπεινοφροσύνην ἐγκομβώσασθε* is without parallel in pre-Christian Greek literature. Where did Peter get his suggestion of it? Since Dean Alford referred us to that scene of the feet-washing in the upper room many scholars have been disposed to find the explanation of it there. It was the Lord's last acted sermon on humility. John records it. "Jesus riseth from supper, and layeth aside his garments; and he took a towel, and girded himself, . . . and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. So he cometh to Simon Peter."[57] Could Peter ever forget any detail of that scene? Here in the epistle he thinks of that towel wherewith Jesus had girded himself and he exhorts his readers to gird themselves with humility, even as Jesus had girded himself with that towel, to serve one another. The girding with the towel was to confine the loosely flow-

[54] 1 Pet. 1. 4. [55] 1 Pet. 5. 4.
[56] 1 Pet. 5. 5. [57] John 13. 4–6.

ing Oriental robe so that it would not be in the way of the menial service. Peter here in his old age thinks that humility might be such a girdle, put on for wear and work, always in readiness for service and protecting the more ornamental elements of character. It is a striking figure and it is made doubly impressive the moment we connect it with the scene in the upper room, as doubtless Peter did in his thought.

6. We read in this epistle, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial among you, which cometh upon you to prove you, as though a strange thing happened unto you,"[58] and we remember how Jesus had said to Peter at one time, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat,"[59] and we know that a man who had been through that sifting and had been proved by such a multitude of temptations and trials never could be surprised by any strange or fiery trial which now could come upon him. He might be taken off his guard, but he never would be surprised by any form of attack.

7. Peter had gone to sleep in the Garden of Gethsemane. In this epistle he exhorts, "Be sober, be watchful."[60] Peter had fallen away in the crisis time and had denied his Lord. In this epistle he exhorts, "Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom withstand steadfast in your faith."[61] Peter had repented and he had been forgiven and he had become a monument of grace. He knows that God can save and keep saved anyone who trusts in him. He says in this epistle, "The God of all grace, who called you unto his eternal glory in Christ, after that we have suffered a little while, shall himself perfect, establish, strengthen you."[62] Peter's own experiences give added point to his precepts and promises. We appreciate them all the more when we remember

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[58] 1 Pet. 4. 12. [59] Luke 22. 31. [60] 1 Pet. 5. 8.
[61] 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. [62] 1 Pet. 5. 10.

from whom they have come and out of what solemn hours of his life they have sprung.

8. Peter had been an eyewitness of the last sufferings of Christ, and this epistle is filled with references to those last scenes. He says that the Spirit of Christ in the prophets "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ."[63] In the longest passage in our New Testament outside the Gospels which has to do with Christ's death Peter says, "Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."[64] In the Greek there are three imperfect tenses, leading up to the aorist tense of the final supreme act of sacrifice. *Οὐκ ἀντελοιδόρει*, he was not reviling, *οὐκ ἠπείλει*, he was not threatening, *παρεδίδου*, he was committing himself; these tenses describe the continuous patient self-surrender of the Lord. Then the aorist, *Ἀνήνεγκεν*, suggests that he bore once for all our sins upon the tree. *Τὸ ξύλον*, the tree, is the word which Peter had used twice in the speeches recorded in the book of Acts. There Peter said to the high priest and the council, "Ye slew" Jesus, "hanging him on a tree [*κρεμάσαντες ἐπὶ ξύλου*]."[65] In preaching to Cornelius and his family Peter repeated the phrase, "Whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree."[66] When peculiar terms of this sort occur in both the epistle and the Petrine speeches recorded in the book of Acts, they would seem to witness to the genuineness of both. The word *μώλωψ* is in the singular and it is not found anywhere else in the New Testament and it stands for the bruise or weal charged with

[63] 1 Pet. 1. 11. [64] 1 Pet. 2. 21–24.
[65] Acts 5. 30. [66] Acts 10. 39.

blood left upon the crushed flesh by the blow of the Roman thong, sharpened with bone or lead. We translate it "stripes," but Peter seems to have remembered the bleeding back of Jesus as all one lurid bruise or weal. He puts the word into the singular to represent that vivid fact.

In this one sentence, then, we have the suggestion of the dignified silence of Jesus under the taunts of his foes, his patience through all the unutterable suffering, the agony of the scourging, and the redemptive finality of the crucifixion; and the whole sentence from beginning to end bears witness to Peter's own observation and unforgettable memories connected with these things. He comes back to the sufferings of Jesus again and again. "Christ also suffered for sins once."[67] "Christ suffered in the flesh."[68] "Insomuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice."[69] James wrote an epistle of about the same length as this Epistle of Peter and in it there is scarcely a single reference to the life or the sufferings of Jesus. He had not companied with Jesus as Peter had. Those memories of the last days of Jesus had not been burned in upon his mind as they had been upon the mind of Peter. We are not surprised that when Peter, the generous-hearted and sympathetic apostle, sits down to write, a whole generation after the events of the crucifixion and the resurrection, he fills his pages with allusions to these things. He never could get away from them, even if he had so desired. He had no such desire. They had furnished the staple of his preaching all his life long. He would have nothing else to preach as long as he lived. He always had been and he always would be one of the elders who had been "a witness of the sufferings of Christ."[70]

9. It is noticeable that in Peter's mind the sufferings of Christ are connected with the glory consequent upon them

[67] 1 Pet. 3. 18. [68] 1 Pet. 4. 1.
[69] 1 Pet. 4. 13. [70] 1 Pet. 5. 1.

through the resurrection and the ascension. He says that the Spirit of Christ in the prophets "testified beforehand the *sufferings* of Christ, and the *glories* that should follow them."[71] He says, "Insomuch as ye are partakers of Christ's *sufferings,* rejoice; that at the revelation of his *glory* also ye may rejoice with exceeding joy."[72] He says, "The elders therefore among you I exhort, who am a fellowelder, and a witness of the *sufferings* of Christ, who am also a partaker of the *glory* that shall be revealed."[73] He says, "The God of all grace, who called you unto his eternal *glory* in Christ, after that ye have *suffered* a little while, shall himself perfect, stablish, strengthen you."[74] Peter had rebelled at first when he had heard that Jesus must suffer and die, but later he had been granted a glimpse of the transfiguration glory and he had become more reconciled to the inevitable.

The resurrection and the appearances of the risen Lord to Peter alone and to Peter with the other disciples had implanted an imperishable hope within him. He was of a hopeful nature always. His hope became dominant and characteristic during his later apostleship. While Paul was the apostle of faith, John the apostle of love, and James the apostle of good works, Peter was the apostle of hope. Beyschlag summarizes Peter's conception of Christianity in this one sentence, "Salvation in Christ is the gracious divine imparting of a sanctifying hope."

The characteristic hopefulness of the apostle is apparent throughout this epistle. Peter's eye is fixed upon the glorious consummation. He longs for it and strives toward it with all the energy he has. He says that "God begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for

[71] 1 Pet. 1. 11. [72] 1 Pet. 4. 13.
[73] 1 Pet. 5. 1. [74] 1 Pet. 5. 10.

you."[75] He says that God "raised him from the dead, and gave him glory; so that your faith and hope might be in God."[76] He says, Be "ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you."[77] He says that the long suffering of God "doth now save you, . . . through the resurrection of Jesus Christ; who is on the right hand of God, having gone into heaven."[78] He says, "When the chief Shepherd shall be manifested, ye shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away."[79] There is a note of exultation in this epistle. The day of "the revelation of the glory of Christ" is near at hand. It will be the day of the great reward. The night is near spent. The morning draws nigh. When the glory light breaks there will be crowns and thrones and a fadeless inheritance to all who follow after their Lord into Immanuel's land.

10. There are reminiscences of the sayings of Jesus here and there in the Epistle. Some of these we have noticed, but there are some others which deserve mention. We find Peter writing, "Fear God,"[80] and again, "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be zealous of that which is good? . . . fear not their fear, neither be troubled,"[81] and we remember how Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled,"[82] and, "Be not afraid of them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell,"[83] and we are sure that Peter would remember these sayings even more readily and more definitely than we do, and we more than suspect that they were in his mind as he wrote. We find Peter writing, "If a *man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name,"[84] and

[75] 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4. [76] 1 Pet. 1. 21. [77] 1 Pet. 3. 15.
[78] 1 Pet. 3. 21, 22. [79] 1 Pet. 5. 4. [80] 1 Pet. 2. 17.
[81] 1 Pet. 3. 13, 14. [82] John 14. 1. [83] Matt. 10. 28.
[84] 1 Pet. 4. 16.

again, "Having your behavior seemly among the Gentiles; that, wherein they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation,"[85] and we remember what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, "Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."[86] It would seem almost certain that Peter had these words of the Master in mind as he wrote.

As Peter exhorts, "Fear God. Honor the king,"[87] does he recall that day when Jesus said to the questioning Pharisees and Herodians, "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's"?[88] When he says, "Casting all your anxiety upon him, because he careth for you,"[89] is he not surely thinking of what the Master said on the mountaintop, "Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life. . . . And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto the measure of his life? And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? . . . Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . . Be not therefore anxious for the morrow: for the morrow will be anxious for itself"[90]? The last beatitude recorded in the Gospels was spoken by the risen Lord to Thomas: "Blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed."[91] We cannot doubt that Peter had this promise in mind when he writes in this epistle in almost identical words, "Whom not having seen ye love; on whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory."[92] Peter knew that the Lord's beatitude had been fulfilled to them.

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[85] 1 Pet. 2. 12. [86] Matt. 5. 16. [87] 1 Pet. 2. 17.
[88] Matt. 22. 21. [89] 1 Pet. 5. 7. [90] Matt. 6. 25–34.
[91] John 20. 29. [92] 1 Pet. 1. 8.

11. A great commission had been given Peter. The Lord had said to him, "Do thou, when once thou hast turned again, stablish thy brethren," *στήρισον τοὺς ἀδελφούς σου*.[93] This whole epistle bears witness to the faithfulness with which Peter fulfilled that task, and when at the close of it we find him repeating the very word used by Jesus we think that in all probability he had that commission of Jesus in mind as he wrote. He says, "The God of all grace . . . shall himself perfect," *καταρτίσει*, make you fit, all right in every particular, "stablish," *στηρίξει*, make you firm, steadfast in everything, "strengthen you," *σθενώσει*, make you strong, capable of anything.[94] After the resurrection Peter's commission was renewed. Three times the Lord said to him, "Feed my lambs," "Tend my sheep," "Feed my sheep."[95] John the Baptist had introduced Jesus to his disciples with that memorable title, "Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!"[96] Peter repeats that doctrine and that title in his epistle, "Ye were redeemed . . . with precious blood, as a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ."[97]

As Christ was the Lamb of God, so Christians are the flock of God. Had not Jesus said that the people were as sheep without a shepherd until he, the Good Shepherd, came? Could Peter ever forget that parable of the lost sheep? If he forgot everything else the Master said, would he not remember the terms of his own last commission? As Jesus was the great shepherd of the sheep he had said that Peter should be an undershepherd, tending the lambs and feeding the sheep of the flock over which Jesus had put him in charge. That responsibility Peter passes on in this epistle to the other elders of the church. He says of all the Christian brethren, "Ye were going astray like sheep; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of

[93] Luke 22. 32. [94] 1 Pet. 5. 10. [95] John 21. 15–17.
[96] John 1. 29. [97] 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.

your souls."[98] Then he exhorts the elders of the church, "Tend the flock of God which is among you, . . . making yourselves ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall be manifested, ye shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away."[99]

12. Peter was called by the church the apostle of the circumcision. He never mentions the law anywhere in this epistle, but that he was a loyal Jew is apparent in his dependence upon the Old Testament for his theological conceptions throughout. To him the Christians are the successors of the old Jewish Church. They are now "an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for *God's* own possession,"[100] "the house of God,"[101] "the flock of God."[102]

13. Peter's experience with Cornelius is suggested at one point in the epistle. Peter had believed that no one outside the Jewish Church was accepted of God. There might be good people apart from the Jews but they never could have the spiritual privileges of the people of God. Cornelius was such a man. He was a devout man and he feared God, and his whole house was influenced by his godly example to join with him in his devotions. He was a generous man who gave much money to needy people irrespective of what race or religion they might represent. He had the habit of prayer. He prayed to God, not occasionally nor at times of special and dire need, but always. These things are true of many a Unitarian and many a Roman Catholic and many a Mohammedan and many a Jew, and there are those who think that there can be no salvation for such people. Peter had his eyes opened by his housetop vision, and he said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him."[103] Peter said this before

[98] 1 Pet. 2. 25. [99] 1 Pet. 5. 2–4. [100] 1 Pet. 2. 9.
[101] 1 Pet. 4. 17. [102] 1 Pet. 5. 2. [103] Acts 10. 34.

Cornelius had had the emotional experience of the filling with the Holy Spirit and the ecstatic experience of the speaking with tongues and the ecclesiastical experience of the baptism with water. The catholicity of spirit which Peter manifested at Cæsarea he suggests here in the epistle. He says that God will hear every good man's prayer. "If ye call on him as Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to each man's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear."[104] If any man was like Cornelius and feared God and prayed always, he would find that God was no respecter of persons, but would accept a devout heathen as well as a devout evangelical.

From between the lines of this epistle we see Peter's face looking out at us. It is the face of an aged saint, weather-beaten still, but mellowed by years of experience of the grace of God. The voice which speaks to us here is the voice of Peter. He makes no direct reference to the many experiences out of which these precepts were born, but we have found that they bear unmistakable traces of their origin in the narratives preserved in the Gospels and the book of Acts.

III. Dependence upon the Pauline Epistles

When we find a constant series of resemblances between two writers we feel sure that the one has been acquainted with the other and that his style and vocabulary and thought have been influenced by the other. The question may be an open one as to which has been the borrower, but that one of the two has been dependent upon the other seems sure. When we compare the First Epistle of Peter with the Epistle to the Romans we find the same ideas following in the same order in certain passages, the repetition of the same words and phrases, some of which are rather rare

[104] 1 Pet. 1. 17.

and two of which at least are not to be found elsewhere in the New Testament, quotations from the Old Testament similarly combined, a quotation with the same variations from the Septuagint version, the same metaphors and the same doctrines so similarly expressed that all critics are agreed that a literary relationship between the two epistles is not to be denied.

Practically all the authorities are agreed that the originality is with Paul and the dependence is on the side of Peter. Sanday says: "Nor can there be any doubt that of the two the Epistle to the Romans is the earlier. Paul works out a thesis clearly and logically; Peter gives a series of maxims for which he is largely indebted to Paul. For example, in Rom. 13. 7 we have a broad general principle laid down; Peter, clearly influenced by the phraseology of that passage, merely gives three rules of conduct. In Paul the language and the ideas come out of the sequence of thought; in Peter they are adopted because they had already been used for the same purpose. This relation between the two epistles is supported by other independent evidence. The same relation which prevails between the First Epistle of Peter and the Epistle to the Romans is also found to exist between it and the Epistle to the Ephesians, and the same hypothesis harmonizes best with the fact in that case also. The three epistles are all connected with Rome; one of them being written to the city, the other two in all probability being written from it."[105] The Epistle to the Romans was treasured by the church in the city of Rome when Peter arrived in that place. It would not be surprising, either, if a copy had been made of the Epistle to the Ephesians before it was sent away from the city of Rome, and that the church in Rome prized it almost equally with the epistle written to them.

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[105] Sanday, Commentary on Romans, p. lxxvi.

Peter was not a theologian, and he was not prone to speculation, and he made no claim to originality of thought. He found these Pauline Epistles in high repute in the church, and he found himself in agreement with their teaching, and he made himself familiar with them and their phraseology, and their thought took possession of his mind. Then when he sat down to write or to dictate an epistle of his own, the ideas and the terms which had become familiar to him in these great epistles of Paul flowed naturally from his lips or from his pen. He even uses the Pauline phrase "in Christ" three times. He begins with "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," just as the Epistle to the Ephesians does. Parallels have been pointed out between this epistle and the First Epistle to the Thessalonians and the First Epistle to the Corinthians and the Epistle to the Galatians and the Epistle to Titus. It has been said that there are more reminiscences of the language of Paul in this epistle than there are of the language of Jesus. There are enough of them to make it clear that Peter had some acquaintance with these Epistles of Paul and that, consciously or unconsciously, he made his own epistle upon their model at many points.

There is no dishonest plagiarism in the Epistle of Peter and there is no slavish imitation of Paul. There is just such an innocent and hearty appropriation of things which seemed to him good as a generous soul like Peter would be apt to make. He always was susceptible to outside influences, and in his later days more especially to all influences which were good. He never seemed to bear any grudge against Paul. He never tried to retaliate for the unpleasant hours Paul had given him at Antioch. He seems heartily to have repented his own conduct and heartily to have admired the character of the man who showed him to be in the wrong. It is wholly to Peter's credit that he seems to recognize the genius and the devotion of Paul and

to honor him for what he was—the superior in many respects of all of the original Twelve.

IV. Date of the Epistle

1. The contents of the epistle itself lead us to think that it was written at the time of some fiery trial to the Christians, and that the very name which they bore was a cause of persecution and suffering. Christians might do well and yet suffer for it. They were subject to interference from the authorities and to legal penalties for the observance of the worship required by their faith.

2. If the parallels pointed out in the Pauline Epistles be granted and the priority of these epistles be allowed, it follows that this epistle must have been written later than the Epistles to the Romans and to the Ephesians and possibly even later than the Epistle to Titus. That would mean some time later than the first Roman imprisonment of Paul, and possibly even later than his second imprisonment.

3. The epistle is dated about the year A. D. 64 by Bleek, Bartlet, Chase, Cook, Lightfoot, Renan, Zahn. These think that the epistle was written just before the outbreak of the persecution under Nero and that Peter died only a little later in the Christian massacre of that time. It seems more probable to many others that the epistle was written after the Neronian crisis, somewhere in the years between A. D. 64 and 67. Among these we may mention Adeney, Bacon, Beyschlag, Eichhorn, Ewald, Farrar, Grimm, Hatch, Hort, Hug, Huther, Moffatt, Neander, Plumptre, Salmon, Schäfer, Sieffert, Thiersch, and De Wette.

V. Place of Writing

In 5. 13 we read, "She that is in Babylon, elect together with *you*, saluteth you." Since such salutations usually were sent from those present with the writer, it would follow

that Peter himself was in Babylon at the time the epistle was written. What Babylon is this?

1. The ready answer, of course, would be that it is the world-famous Babylon on the Euphrates River. Adam Clarke, Dean Howson, Bernhard Weiss, Michaelis, Grimm, Hase, Calvin, Johnstone, Dean Alford, Dean Stanley, and others so conclude. They say (1) Peter's mission was to the Jews rather than to the Gentiles. As far as we know he labored only among the Jews. The last time he appears in any historical record he is in the church at Antioch. It is a very poorly sustained tradition of the later days which sends Peter to Rome or anywhere in the West. The five churches to which this epistle is sent are all Eastern churches, and it is altogether likely that all of Peter's missionary activity was in the East. It is well known that there was a considerable Jewish colony in the Babylon of Mesopotamia. Why, then, should anyone question the fact that Peter had come to this city in his missionary work and that this epistle was written from this place?

(2) The order in which the countries are named in the address, "to the elect who are sojourners of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,"[106] shows that the writer was in the East and so naturally names these provinces in the order of their proximity to himself, beginning at the north and naming them in succession as his thought travels on from one to another to the farther west. This order would be most unnatural in one who was writing from the farther west to sojourners in the provinces east of him.

(3) What possible good reason can there be for giving an allegorical interpretation to the name "Babylon" here? There is no trace of any allegory anywhere else in the epistle. Peter says in the preceding sentence that he sends the

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[106] 1 Pet. 1. 1.

epistle by Silvanus, his faithful brother. No one thinks of interpreting Silvanus allegorically. Silvanus is a real man, of whom we know many things from other sources. In the sentence next following Peter sends greeting from Mark, his son. No one thinks of interpreting that proper name allegorically. Mark was a real man of whom we know much from other sources. If Silvanus and Mark are not allegorical, why should this proper name coming between them be considered allegorical? It ought to be interpreted as literally as they. If that be true, then the Mesopotamian Babylon must be meant.

Opponents of this position reply that there is no trace of any ecclesiastical tradition that Peter ever went into Mesopotamia or ever resided in Babylon, and it does not seem probable that Peter would visit that city and that he would meet Silas and Mark there.

2. A small group of critics—Le Clerc, Greswell, Mill, Pearson, Pott, and others—have thought of an Egyptian Babylon, a Roman fortress in Old Cairo; but the tradition which connects Mark with Egypt and the possible Egyptian origin of some of the apocryphal Petrine books would not seem to furnish a sufficient basis for any conclusion that Peter lived in Egypt and wrote from that land.

3. We are disposed to believe that those authorities who say that the epistle was written from Rome and that the name "Babylon" is used allegorically for that city are more likely to be correct. They have the following reasons to adduce for their position: (1) This is the oldest tradition on the subject. Clement of Alexandria, Papias, Eusebius, and Jerome agree that the epistle was written in Rome. Eusebius says, "Peter makes mention of Mark in his first epistle which they say that he wrote in Rome itself as is indicated by him, when he calls the city, by a figure, Babylon."[107] This tradition falls in with all the other best au-

[107] Euseb., Hist. Eccl. ii, 15.

thenticated traditions concerning Peter's visit to Rome and his martyrdom there. (2) The tradition is that the Gospel according to Mark was written in Rome, and that Peter and Mark were together there at the time of its composition. Why conjecture that Peter and Mark were together in the Babylon of the Far East when there is no tradition anywhere to that effect, and the tradition does say that they were together in Rome? (3) The Paulinism of this epistle is accounted for most easily on this supposition. Pauline influence was dominant in Rome. The Epistles to the Romans and to the Ephesians were held in high repute there, and Peter could have had access to them in that city. (4) The name "Babylon" is applied to Rome in the Apocalypse, and doubtless was a symbolic name current among the Christians after the Neronian persecution; and it could be explained by Silvanus, the bearer of the epistle, if it needed explanation.

Among those who represent this view that Rome was the place of writing are Ewald, Farrar, Hofmann, Hort, the Tübingen school, McClymont, Moffatt, Salmon, Sieffert and others. Hort thinks that the bearer of the epistle sailed from Rome to Pontus and made a circuit through the provinces mentioned, returning to Bithynia, and he declares that "the order Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia is an exact inversion of the order which would present itself to a writer looking mentally toward Asia Minor from Babylon."

VI. Style of the Epistle

1. The Greek of this epistle is surprisingly good. Many authorities think that fact proves that Peter himself cannot be responsible for it, and there is a growing tendency among modern writers to emphasize the part which Silvanus has played in the composition. They interpret the phrase, "*διὰ Σιλουανοῦ ὑμῖν ἔγραψα*, by Silvanus I have written

unto you,"[108] to mean that Peter furnished the thoughts and Silvanus polished them up and put them into the good Greek in which they now appear. That may have been true. The writer of the epistle knows the difference between good and bad Greek and while he himself was not a Greek, he knows how to use the language with a degree of correctness not found in many of the books of the New Testament. There is no evidence that he thought in Hebrew and translated his thought into Greek. There are no Latinisms. There are very few colloquialisms.

In the Greek of the epistle the following features are noteworthy: (1) There is an extraordinary number of peculiar expressions. There are sixty-two single words in the epistle which do not occur in any other of the New Testament books. In the two epistles, First and Second Peter, there are one hundred and sixteen of these *hapax legomena,* and only one of the one hundred and sixteen is to be found in both epistles. This unusual vocabulary seems to have been influenced considerably by the Books of Maccabees and the Book of Wisdom in the Apocrypha. (2) "The article is employed in more classical style than by any other writer in the New Testament."[109] (3) Ἄν never is used, and there are very few connecting particles. "This fact alone is sufficient to show that the writer was not a Greek."[110]

2. There is evidence of considerable literary taste and oratorical power in the composition of the epistle. Peter seems to delight in putting a thing positively and then negatively. He arrays opposites side by side with telling effect.

3. Peter had a poetic streak in him. (1) Figures of speech abound in this epistle, and especially such as relate to the sight. The salvation which Peter preached was such as would be able to be observed in the end. It was ready to be *revealed* in the last time.[111] Peter says that the mys-

[108] 1 Pet. 5. 12.
[109] Bigg, Commentary, p. 4.
[110] Bigg, *op cit.*, p. 5.
[111] 1 Pet. 1. 5.

teries of the gospel are such things as "angels desire to *look into*."[112] The Gentiles are to *behold* the good works of the Christians and so glorify God.[113] The day of the visitation of our God is to be a day of inspection, of *looking over* every man's work.[114] Jesus is the Shepherd and the *Overseer* of our souls.[115] Christ left us an example which we are to scrutinize closely and thus follow exactly.[116] The wives of ungodly husbands are to be sermons in shoes, so that if their husbands never hear the gospel preached anywhere else they, nevertheless, will see the gospel lived in their homes, and *beholding* the chaste behavior of their wives they will be gained for the Christ.[117] Peter himself was a *witness* of the sufferings of Christ.[118] He testifies to that which he himself has seen. The elders of the church are to exercise *oversight*.[119] The chief Shepherd shall be *manifested* to give them their reward.[120] His glory is to be *revealed* amid the rejoicing of all of the saints.[121]

(2) There are many words which are condensed metaphors, and their meaning usually is much more apparent in the Greek than in the English translation. We note a few examples:

(*a*) We look again at that clause, "which things the angels desire to look into."[122] Lumby says: "*Look into* is a feeble expression whereby to render παρακύψαι. The Greek pictorially expresses the bent body and the outstretched neck of one who is stooping and straining to gaze on some sight which calls for wonder. Now, except in the Epistle of James, where the same word is used of the earnest gaze of the believer into the perfect law of liberty, this verb is employed only here and in the two accounts of the visit of Peter and John to the sepulcher on the morning of the

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[112] 1 Pet. 1. 12. [113] 1 Pet. 2. 12. [114] *Ibid.*
[115] 1 Pet. 2. 25. [116] 1 Pet. 2. 21. [117] 1 Pet. 3. 1, 2.
[118] 1 Pet. 5. 1. [119] 1 Pet. 5. 2. [120] 1 Pet. 5. 4.
[121] 1 Pet. 4. 13. [122] 1 Pet. 1. 12.

resurrection. Both evangelists, Luke and John, employ the same word, and its use may be due to Peter's narration, which was given to the rest of the apostles on their return. The word is exactly descriptive of what he had seen, as John had reached the sepulcher before him and had paused there to look in. It was the most pictorial and expressive word he could apply to the bowed form and earnest gaze of his fellow disciple as he stooped down and looked into the empty tomb. In that vacant grave John saw what angels had longed to see. Its vacancy was the seal of man's salvation, the beginning of the glories which followed the sufferings of Christ, the keynote of the gospel which proclaimed, through that resurrection, the rising again of all the dead. In thought Peter seems by this word to have gone back to that scene by the grave of the Lord, and to have before him John's eager and astonished act and gaze while he bent down that his eyes might make sure of the truth of such things as the angels desired to see."[123]

(*b*) "The Father judgeth without respect of persons,"[124] we say; but the word which Peter uses in the Greek implies that the Father does not receive men at their face value merely. He looks beneath the surface and sees the realities of character there. He respects the hidden man of the heart. He has little or no respect for the face men put on things. It is all there in the single word, *ἀπροσωπολήμπτως*.

(*c*) Our version speaks of the spiritual milk "which is without guile."[125] That relative clause Peter has put into a single word, *ἄδολον*, and did he not intend to urge his readers to long for the spiritual, "unadulterated" milk, which alone was safe for newborn babes and which alone would insure their rapid growth in grace? The infant mortality in our great cities in the slum districts in the hot

[123] Expositor, I, iv, pp. 117, 118. [124] 1 Pet. 1. 17.
[125] 1 Pet. 2. 2.

summer season when no Pasteurized milk can be obtained for the little ones gives us moderns the illustration of the need of Peter's exhortation and the word which Peter used gives us to understand that there was just as much adulteration of milk in his day as in our own.

(*d*) The Christians are, according to Peter, "sojourners and pilgrims here."[126] They are not at home on this earth. They are away from home as long as they stay here. They have a house not built with hands, eternal in the heavens, and any house in which they may live here is only a hotel, a place of lodging for a time. It is a frequent figure in the Scriptures, but it is interesting to see that Peter, the going man, always in motion and always hurrying toward some goal, adopts it as a picture of human life.

(*e*) We read in our version, "For so is the will of God, that by well-doing ye should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men."[127] The verb Peter uses in the latter clause is *φιμόω* which means "to muzzle." Foolish men are to have their mouths shut by the good conduct of the Christians. All who would bark at them or bite them must find themselves muzzled by their well-doing. As a muzzle renders an ill-tempered cur harmless so their consistent behavior must render harmless the most malicious of their foes. The Greek puts a very vivid picture before us in the stead of that commonplace English translation.

(*f*) Peter says, Do not use your freedom, "for a cloke of wickedness."[128] *Ἐπικάλυμμα* is the Greek word. It means a veil or covering. As a veil would conceal a malicious look or a homely face behind an outward appearance of great decorum, so Christian freedom might be used as a covering behind which malice or wickedness of any sort might masquerade. Antinomianism has always made this use of the freedom of the Christian life. Liberty has been used as

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[126] I Pet. 2. 11. [127] I Pet. 2. 15. [128] I Pet. 2. 16.

a warrant for license. Freedom has been made an excuse for frailty. Peter's mind saw the picture of wickedness skulking behind the cover of a profession of Christian privilege and he enters his most emphatic protest against such hypocrisy in his use of this single Greek word.

(*g*) Peter says that Christ left us an "example,"[129] and the word he uses here is *ὑπογραμμός*, a copyhead. As a fair copy is set at the head of the page and the schoolboy writes under it his awkward attempts at reproduction and he does it over and over again until his imitation begins to look something like the example set before him, so we are to see in Christ the perfect example for our lives and we are to endeavor to reproduce his life in our own, and however imperfect our first attempts may be, we are to keep at it patiently until at last we can approximate in some measure the model he has given us. That is all suggested in the one word Peter has used, and the definiteness of the picture is wholly lost in the English translation.

(*h*) Peter writes "Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evildoer, or as a meddler in other men's matters."[130] We know what a murderer and a thief and an evildoer are, but we are not so sure about the last criminal in this list. He is represented by a single word in the original, a word which as far as we know was coined by Peter himself, for it seems to be peculiar to him, *ἀλλοτριοεπίσκοπος*. It means literally "a bishop in the things belonging to another." The authorities differ widely in their definitions of this term. If we translate as our version does, it seems like something of an anticlimax to begin with a murderer and end with a meddler. Possibly Peter thought it was a climax. He may have said to himself that to kill a man outright was a lesser sin than to meddle with his affairs and to muddle them until his life was made miserable and his whole career was wrecked.

[129] 1 Pet. 2. 21. [130] 1 Pet. 4. 15.

Ramsay thinks that "the word refers to the charge of tampering with family relationships, causing disunion and discord, rousing discontent and disobedience, and so on."[131] Nothing could be much worse than that. A murderer can be dealt with and put out of the way by summary legal processes, but a persistent meddler of this sort may maintain his position in society and keep beyond the reach of the law while at the same time he is the most sinister and pestiferous member of the whole community. Calvin thought that the term stood for one who was covetous of other people's money, but there does not seem to be any good ground for such a conclusion.

Others have thought that Peter in the use of this word was warning Christians against participation in trades or occupations which would be inconsistent with their Christian profession. They must have nothing to do with the heathen theater or houses of ill-fame or anything else which would disgrace the cause for which they stood. Still others have suggested that the word warns Christians against sedition or anything contrary to their duties as good citizens. They must not occupy themselves in any calling inconsistent with a Christian profession, and they must not get mixed up in any affair contrary to good citizenship. Any of these suggestions may have a measure of truth in it. We do not know, for the word is not found elsewhere and we must guess more or less at its meaning here.

A bishop is one in supreme authority. If he choose he can interfere at any point and at any time. To be sure, if he exercise this privilege very continuously, he is sure to become very unpopular. Does Peter mean to suggest that a Christian man must not assume that he is a supreme authority and arbiter of other men's conduct and therefore feel called upon to put in his word of advice or of protest

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[131] Ramsay, Church in the Roman Empire, p. 293, note v; p. 348, note.

on all occasions whether it had been asked for or not? A man who does that can make himself a first-class nuisance all the time. If he put in most of his time in overseeing and superintending his neighbors' affairs, he probably will do more harm than good to his neighbors and he will make the Christian profession unpopular to a degree.

Peter may have thought that Christians ought to keep their noses out of what did not concern them and keep their eyes off those things which it might be just as well for them not to see. They need not be kill-joys on every occasion. Their zeal must not outrun their discretion. It might be comparatively easy for them to refrain from murder and from thieving and from any other patent evil of that sort, and it might be more difficult for them to avoid all extravagances of pious profession and all inopportunities of remonstrance among their heathen neighbors; but if they achieved the last, they would help the Christian cause along more rapidly than they could in any other way.

A too zealous Christian might overdo the thing and do much harm. A too cautious Christian might underdo the thing and miss many an opportunity of doing good. A discreet Christian would pursue the middle course and be admired of all men as a rare specimen of good sense and consecration. It may be that Peter had had many a sad experience as the result of his own impetuous interference in other men's affairs in his earlier days and that he had come to consider that prudence at this point was a supreme virtue in the Christian life. When he had intermeddled with the Master's affairs at Cæsarea Philippi he had been called a devil and the prince of devils for his pains. In these later days he may have come to believe that such interference was the superlative sin. The word which he uses here is a remarkable word and it probably presented a perfectly definite picture to Peter's mind when he coined it and it is full of suggestions to us.

(*i*) Peter exhorts the elders not to lord it over their "charge," κλήρων.[132] The noun is plural and it means in the singular "a lot" and in the plural "persons allotted to one's care and oversight." Therefore in this case it stood for all the laity, for whose spiritual welfare the clergy was responsible; and it is an interesting fact that the word has come down to us with its meaning reversed and instead of the laity it represents the clergy themselves.

(*j*) Peter sees Christ as the Good Shepherd,[133] and the devil as a roaring lion.[134] The Christians are a flock,[135] protected by the one and assailed by the other.

Farrar says: "The style of Peter in this epistle is characterized by the fire and energy which we should expect to find in his forms of expression; but that energy is tempered by the tone of apostolic dignity, and by the fatherly mildness of one who was now aged, and was near the close of a life of labor. He speaks with authority, and yet with none of the threatening sternness of James. We find in the letter the plain and forthright spirit of the man insisting again and again on a few great leading conceptions. The subtle dialectics, the polished irony, the involved thoughts, the lightninglike rapidity of inference and suggestion, which we find in the letters of the Apostle of the Uncircumcision, are wholly wanting in him. His causal connections, marking the natural and even flow of his thoughts, are of the simplest character; and yet a vigorously practical turn of mind, a quick susceptibility of influence, and a large catholicity of spirit, such as we know that he possessed, are stamped upon every page. He aims throughout at practical exhortation, not at systematic exposition; and his words, in their force and animation, reflect the simple, sensuous, and passionate nature of the impulsive Simon of whom we read in the Gospels."[136]

[132] 1 Pet. 5. 3. [133] 1 Pet. 5. 4. [134] 1 Pet. 5. 8.
[135] 1 Pet. 5. 2. [136] Farrar, Early Days of Christianity, p. 81.

VII. One Peculiar Doctrine

The epistle is practical and ethical throughout. It has no speculative interests and no theological subtleties and no mystic depths. Peter was a man of action, and whatever he learned he immediately put into practice. The only sanctification in which he had much faith was that which resulted in obedience.[137] The only holiness in which he believed was that which manifested itself in all manner of living.[138] He fills his epistle with exhortations to practical piety, and all the doctrinal statements in the epistle can be paralleled elsewhere in the New Testament, with the exception of one. It is a most interesting fact that the Apostle of Hope is the only one to lift the veil of sacred revelation over the fate of the impenitent dead. He says, "Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit; in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which aforetime were disobedient, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water."[139]

A recent commentator declines to comment at any length on these words and is content to say in a note at the bottom of the page: "There is so much dispute regarding the meaning of this passage that nothing certain can be affirmed. The writer evidently intends to express the belief that Christ visited and evangelized the world of the dead; all beyond this is doubtful."[140] Suppose we should accept this cautious conclusion, it yet would remain true that Peter alone was responsible for the doctrine of the Harrowing of Hell. The older commentators were much prejudiced against this doctrine and they made strenuous effort to show that Peter

[137] 1 Pet. 1. 2.
[138] 1 Pet. 1. 15.
[139] 1 Pet. 3. 18–20.
[140] Mitchell, Commentary, p. 268.

meant something other than that which he had said in this passage, but by far the larger portion of the more recent expositors have decided that the only fair exegesis is that which acknowledges that Peter here sets forth the fact that Christ after the crucifixion went in the spirit to preach to the spirits; and when we add the statement made a little farther on in the epistle, that "unto this end was the gospel preached even to the dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit,"[141] they are ready to agree that the object of this preaching was the salvation of the lost, the dead who had died disobedient and had been judged according to men in the flesh. Hart, in the Expositor's Greek Testament, says that "the impersonal passive in the latter passage leaves the way open for the development of the belief that not Christ only but also the apostles preached to the dead:"[142]

How can we escape from these conclusions? We might say with some of the commentators that Christ preached to the spirits in prison, but that he did not preach any hope to them but simply condemnation. What would be the use of such preaching? The spirits in prison must have known that they were in prison. What need was there for the crucified Jesus to proclaim to them their conscious and continuous state? Was that a gospel anyway? Gospel is good news. If the gospel was preached to them, must it not have had in it some element of hope or good news? Then does not Peter say explicitly that the gospel was preached to them that they might live, and that they might live according to God, in Godlike spirit? In the International Critical Commentary Bigg says, "Life like God in spirit is blessed life; the object of the preaching was the salvation of the dead."[143] Evidently, then, any mere preaching of condemnation does not fairly represent Peter's teaching.

[141] I Pet. 4. 6. [142] Vol. V, p. 72. [143] p. 171.

It has been suggested again that the preaching of Christ in the abode of the dead was to the righteous alone. He preached to them and he preached salvation to them; but he preached salvation only to those who had become the heirs of immortality by a righteous life on earth. Does not Peter say that Christ went in the spirit to the spirits in prison, not who had been righteous but who "aforetime were disobedient"? Does he not say that the gospel was preached to the dead who did not have spiritual life that they might have spiritual life?

Still others have suggested that Christ did preach to the spirits who had been disobedient in life but only to those who had repented in the hour of death. Does not this seem like desperate catching at straws? Is it not sufficient to say in reply to any such suggestion that Peter has given no hint of such exceptional cases, but makes his two statements as general as possible, the first of the disobedient in the time of the flood and the second of all the dead? Why attempt to torture or twist Peter's plain meaning into something which seems to us a little more orthodox? Why not accept him as a standard of orthodoxy, and if he alone has any clear teaching on this subject—and nowhere else in the New Testament can anything be found to contradict it—why not accept his teaching as final in its authority? It is at least permissible to hope that the redeeming work of Christ is carried on beyond the grave, and that there is an endless opportunity for service in evangelism until all possible souls have been won for the kingdom. In that vista of hope for the lost and work for the saints in glory and final triumph for our Lord we could rejoice for evermore.

We always have thought that Peter was the disciple who asked Jesus, "Lord, are they few that be saved?"[144] Peter so often was the first to speak when any such question arose among the disciples, he so often was the chosen or

[144] Luke 13. 23–30.

self-appointed spokesman for the apostolic company; his curiosity always was so keen, and he was so apt to question when others were hesitant or more reverent than he. We always have felt sure that Peter had pressed that interrogation upon the Master, and just as the Master rebuked Peter's curiosity about the fate of John later and said to him, "What is that to thee? follow thou me," so here Jesus did not make any direct answer to the inquiry but said, "Strive to enter in by the narrow door: for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." "What is that to thee? You see to it that you yourself get into heaven and leave the fate of others to Him who doeth all things well. It is enough for you to make sure of your own salvation. That is no easy task. It will take all the energy there is in you. You will need to agonize and strive. There are many who seek to enter and are not able. See to it that you are not of their number."

That was a sufficient answer to idle curiosity; but the Lord was not satisfied to leave the subject there. He added a warning against trust in acquaintance with him to insure salvation and spoke the parable of the shut door and the turning away of those who had not partaken of his spirit and lived his life, and made it clear that all workers of iniquity should suffer their due recompense; and then he came back to the question which was responsible for the discourse, and he said: "Are there few that be saved? They shall come from the east and west, and from the north and south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. All the ends of the earth shall send up their multitudes of the saved through the open gates into the city. And behold, there are last who shall be first, and there are first who shall be last; but first and last all shall enter in." It may have been the very time and place in which Peter became the Apostle of Hope. His Christian optimism may have found its origin in the revelation of that discourse.

Here in his epistle there is a reminiscence of his former belief. Peter suggests something of this sort: "There were only a few saved in the time of the Flood. There were only eight people in the ark, and the great multitudes outside the ark perished in the rising waters. There was a time when I thought that the church was like that ark, and that a few would be saved in it while the vast majority of the human race would stay outside it and be lost. There were so few of us who followed the Master. We were a mere handful in the midst of the multitudes who were opposed to us. I asked the Master once whether only a few would be saved, and he gave me to understand that there might be only a few at present, but that the campaign had but just begun, and that it was to be continued until every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus was Lord and Master of the race. That was to be true on earth, and it was to be true in the spiritual realm. That meant, of course, that the campaign was to be carried into the regions beyond the grave. The gospel was to be preached to the spirits in prison. It was intended to set all captives free. It was to be a message of deliverance to all those who were bound. The gospel was preached to the dead, that they might be judged indeed according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."

Where did Peter get this doctrine? What was his authority for it? He never would have been an innovator along theological lines. He never would have thought of enunciating any new doctrine in the Christian Church unless he had been sure that he had the best of authority for it. He must have been absolutely sure of his facts, or he never would have said that Jesus preached the gospel to the dead. How could he have been assured of such a truth? Only by divine revelation. Only by direct communication from the Author of truth himself.

When was this revelation given to Peter? There always

has seemed to be only one occasion on which such a revelation naturally would be made. We learn from Paul in the First Epistle to the Corinthians and from Luke in his account of the resurrection appearances of the Lord that there was an appearance to Peter alone. We have no account of that personal interview which Peter had with the risen Lord. We can only conjecture what took place at that interview and what words passed between the two, the Master who had conquered death and hell and the grave and the disciple who had been plunged into the depths of despair by the crucifixion. Peter's despair was turned into deathless hope in that interview, and it always has seemed to us that the Master must have told Peter at that time what Peter has written down so clearly and so unqualifiedly in his epistle. He knew that Jesus had preached to the spirits in prison because Jesus himself had told him so. He knew that the gospel was preached to the dead in order that they might live to God in the spirit, because Jesus had told him so. He had the best possible authority for all of these statements in his epistle, or he never would have ventured to make them. He was no speculative adventurer. He preached only what he had received from the Master himself in direct revelation.

A special vision had been granted him at Joppa, and with that authority behind him Peter was ready to set all precedent at defiance and blaze the way into new regions for the preaching of the Christian faith. Nothing less than such a direct revelation of the divine will in the matter would have sufficed to make Peter take such an unheard-of step as the admission of Gentiles into the exclusively Jewish church; but with that divine direction Peter never hesitated a minute even though he knew that the whole church might be astonished and might feel outraged by any such procedure on his part. So in this particular doctrine Peter would not stop to inquire whether any other apostle or church leader

had promulgated any such truth. With a direct divine revelation behind him Peter would have considered that sufficient. He would have proclaimed the truth revealed to him even though he knew that the whole church might be astonished and might feel outraged by any such procedure on his part.

With the conception of Peter's character which we have from a study of all that is told about him in the New Testament we are inclined to feel that if Peter in his epistle sets forth one peculiar doctrine, that doctrine must have behind it a peculiar divine authority. Nothing less would account for it. Peter is not one to originate anything in theology. He is a plain, practical man, not given to philosophizing or speculation. However, he was a man prone to ask questions; and he had a great curiosity concerning the future of himself and his associates and everybody else. We know of no question which Peter would be so likely to ask the risen Lord as that old question, "Are they few that be saved? How about all the disobedient dead?" We know of no revelation of the risen Lord to Peter which would be so likely to give him his character of the Apostle of Hope as the revelation which Peter has put into his epistle as its one peculiar feature. There is nothing in the epistle to which we would give more weight.

VIII. Genuineness of the Epistle

There is no sufficient reason for questioning the genuineness of this writing. We may be uncertain as to the share which Silvanus had in its composition, but the unbroken tradition is that Peter is responsible for it and the evidence runs back into apostolic times. Even Renan declares that it is "one of the writings of the New Testament which is most anciently and most unanimously cited as authentic."[145] It is cited by "Second Peter," Polycarp, Papias, Hermas,

[145] L'Antechrist, p. vi.

Basilides, and the Epistle to Diognetus. Irenæus is the first to call the epistle by name. Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen quote from it frequently. Eusebius places it in the first class of the New Testament writings, as freely acknowledged by all. It is in the early versions. Strangely enough, it is not mentioned in the Muratorian Fragment. However, it may have been omitted by mistake, as Salmon suggests, or it may have been mentioned in some portion of the Fragment now lost. "There is no book in the New Testament which has earlier, better, or stronger attestation."[146]

We are glad to have an epistle from Peter's pen. It gives a last view of the apostle himself and it is a most encouraging view, for the impetuous and blundering, though loving and loyal, disciple of the Gospels has become a ripened saint in the epistle. Jesus loved John more than Peter, but in the beginning he trusted Peter more than John. He trusted him with the responsibility of founding the church at Pentecost and of introducing the first Gentile into the church and of revealing to the church the hope of evangelistic work beyond the grave. It was honor enough for any man. He ranks next to Paul and John among the letter writers of the early church.

[146] Bigg, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

PART IV

THE "SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER"

THE "SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER"

I. Uncertainty as to Authenticity

The genuineness of the First Epistle of Peter is as certain as that of any book in the New Testament. The genuineness of this "Second Epistle of Peter" is more uncertain than that of any other book in the New Testament. Of all the books in the canon of the New Testament "it is the one for which we can produce the smallest amount of external evidence, and which at the same time offers the greatest number of internal difficulties."[1] The First Epistle was accepted from the beginning as the work of the apostle, both by the church of the East and the church of the West. If the "Second Epistle" also was the work of the apostle, why was it not as immediately and as generally recognized? It is not quoted, and we are not certain that it is mentioned by any writer in the first or in the second century.

The Peshito was the Bible of the Eastern church in this period. It was the Aramaic version of the Greek. It contained all the books of our New Testament, except "Second Peter," Second and Third John, Jude, and Revelation. The Itala was the old Latin version of the New Testament and it was the Bible of the Western church in the second century, and it contained all the books of our New Testament, except Hebrews, James, and "Second Peter." Put the Peshito and the Itala together and they testify that all the books in our present canon were read as Scripture in the church of the first two centuries, with the single exception of "Second Peter."

In the churches of Syria, Asia Minor, North Africa, and

[1] Farrar, Early Days of Christianity, p. 116.

Italy the four Gospels, the book of Acts, the thirteen epistles of Paul, one epistle of Peter and one epistle of John were accepted as canonical and these books were unquestioned by any section of the church. Twenty of our New Testament books had established themselves as of scriptural authority in the universal church. Six others were accepted by some and questioned by others. Of the twenty-seven books in our New Testament only one is missing in the canon of the first and second centuries. That one is the "Second Epistle of Peter." It stands by itself, as the last to be recognized and the one without recognition when all the other books were accepted, either with or without question.

If the epistle is genuine, who can give any adequate explanation of this fact? If Peter wrote it, why was it not accepted as of apostolic authority together with the First Epistle from his pen? Where was it through the first two centuries, since no one quoted from it or referred to it in that time? If it were in existence and were considered authentic, it would seem impossible that no one would have mentioned it in any writing of the two hundred years. Those who are disposed to defend the genuineness of this epistle[2] have searched diligently through all the early literature of the church for some reminiscence of the language of "Second Peter," and while they have been able to find some phrases which seemed to suggest the phraseology of this epistle, they have not been able to show any connection between them and the epistle, and in the lack of direct quotation and specific mention it seems safer to conclude that all these phrases are from the current religious vocabulary of the times and that all the authorities upon which we rely to prove the authenticity of the other New Testament books have wholly failed us here.

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[2] Salmon, Warfield, Bigg, Zahn, and others.

In brief, the history of the epistle as to its recognition in the church is as follows: 1. It is ignored by Polycarp, Ignatius, Barnabas, Clement of Rome, the Didache, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Justin, Theophilus of Antioch, Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory of Nyssa, Basil, Chrysostom, Theodore, and Theodoret. Peter was known personally in Syria and especially in Antioch, yet the Peshito, the Syrian New Testament, omitted "Second Peter," and the Antiochian school of exegetes neither comment upon it nor quote from it. There are almost innumerable quotations from the other books of the New Testament in the writings of Chrysostom, Theodore and Theodoret, but not a single reference to "Second Peter" occurs among them.

2. The epistle was regarded as of uncertain authenticity or was controverted or was rejected by Clement of Alexandria, Didymus of Alexandria, Origen, and Eusebius. No reference to "Second Peter" can be found in the extant works of Clement of Alexandria. He never quotes from it nor alludes to it. Eusebius declares, however, that Clement commented upon this epistle, or, rather, that he commented upon all of the Catholic Epistles, which may and may not have included "Second Peter." It seems that Clement ranked "Second Peter" with the Apocalypse of Peter and did not put it on the same level with First Peter or the other apostolic writings. No reference to "Second Peter" can be found in the extant Greek works of Origen. Six such references can be found in the translation of Origen's works into Latin by Rufinus; but in that translation it always is doubtful what can be ascribed to Origen and what is interpolated by Rufinus himself. "The first absolutely incontrovertible reference in Christian literature to 'Second Peter' is found in the words of Origen reported by Eusebius, 'And Peter, on whom the Church of Christ is built, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, has left one acknowledged

epistle; perhaps also a second, but this is doubtful.' "[3] Origen, therefore, knew of the existence of this epistle, but his own judgment was unfavorable to it.

Eusebius discusses the authenticity and canonicity of "Second Peter," and he makes the following statement concerning it: "The opinion has been handed down to us that the so-called Second Epistle is not canonical, but it has been studied along with the other Scriptures, as it appears profitable to many."[4] In another place Eusebius makes a canonical list and after naming the books of the New Testament which are accepted by all he adds, "Among the disputed writings, which are nevertheless recognized by many,"[5] are five books and among them he names "the second epistle of Peter." Strachan says of these statements: "The evidence of Eusebius is specially valuable (1) because he records the opinion that in his day Second Peter was regarded as uncanonical; (2) because he records a judgment of the past against it; (3) he failed to find any recognition of the book as Petrine in the earlier literature known to him, and his knowledge was wide. There can be little doubt that Eusebius himself rejected the idea of Petrine authorship, but he was also one of those to whom it was a profitable book."[6] Didymus declared flatly that the epistle was "false."

3. After quotations and references in the writings of the church fathers the next most important witnesses to the authenticity of our New Testament books are to be found in the Versions, which in the case of the Peshito and the Itala go back into the second century. We already have seen that both of these most ancient versions omit "Second Peter" from their canon, and their testimony, therefore, is wholly adverse. The next most important testimony is to

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[3] Chase, Hastings's Bible Dictionary, vol. iii, p. 803. Eusebius, Hist. Eccl., vi, 25. 8.

[4] Eusebius, *op. cit.*, iii, 3. 1. [5] Eusebius, *op. cit.*, iii, 25. 3.

[6] Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. v, p. 84.

be found in the manuscripts of the Greek Testament containing New Testament books. We turn to what is our oldest manuscript, the Codex Vaticanus or Codex B, and in it we find two divisions into sections, one older than the other; and the older division is carried through all of the Catholic Epistles with the single exception of "Second Peter." Chase says, "The conclusion is inevitable that the ancestor of Codex B. to which these divisions were first attached, did not contain Second Peter."[7]

4. The two Egyptian versions, the Sahidic and the Bohairic, include "Second Peter" with the other Catholic Epistles. The dates of these versions are still uncertain. They may belong to the third century. Church councils at Laodicea and Hippo and Carthage declared the epistle canonical. These councils met late in the fourth century. The epistle was recognized as authentic by Ambrose of Milan and Priscillian of Spain in the last quarter of the fourth century. In this same period it was included in the canonical list of Philastrius of Brescia, as it was twenty-five years later by Rufinus. Jerome knew of the doubts concerning the epistle, and he said, "By many it is denied to be Peter's on account of the differences in style from the first epistle," but he went on to say, "From this difference in style we judge that Peter made use of different interpreters." So Jerome put it into the Vulgate, and thus did more than anyone else to bring about its final acceptance in the church. The epistle was admitted to the Greek manuscripts in the fourth century, though the Syrian church still rejected it. The Monophysite branch of the Syrian church accepted the epistle early in the sixth century, but the whole church did not until some time in the Middle Ages. The epistle was accepted by Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Augustine and Ephraim.

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[7] Chase, *op. cit.*, vol. iii, p. 804.

5. Doubts concerning the epistle were freely expressed by Erasmus,[8] Luther,[9] Calvin, Grotius,[10] Scaliger, and Salmasius of the Reformation period. The genuineness of the epistle has been denied in part by Bertholdt, Bunsen, Ullmann, and Lange. Hatch, Sanday, and Ramsay are inclined to decide against it; and the same thing might be said of Weiss, Farrar, Harman, and Huther. The epistle has been declared non-apostolic by Baur, Bleek, Brückner, Davidson, De Wette, Eichhorn, Godet, Harnack, Hilgenfeld, Holtzmann, Jülicher, Immer, Jacoby, Keim, Mangold, Mayerhoff, Neander, Pfleiderer, Pressensé, Renan, Reuss, Moffatt, Abbott, Chase, Sabatier, Schenkel, Schwegler, Semler, Simcox, Stevens, von Soden and many others. Its genuineness is defended by Camerlynck, Dillenseger, and Henkel among the Roman Catholics and by Alford, Bigg, Falconer, Guericke, Hofmann, Lumby, Moorehead, Plummer, Plumptre, Salmon, Schmidt, Spitta, Thiersch, Warfield, Windischmann, and Zahn.

The "Second Epistle of Peter" was the last of the New Testament books to be received into the New Testament canon. There is no certain trace of it anywhere in the first and second centuries of church history. There is no evidence of its existence in the Western church before the Nicene Council. The church of the fourth century put it into the canon, but the men of that day were in no sense better able to decide upon critical questions than the scholars of to-day. In some respects they were far less so. The criticism of that day was very imperfect and undeveloped, and when we find any individual scholar with the critical faculty in that period we find him invariably expressing

[8] Spurious or written by Sylvanus at Peter's direction.

[9] 2 Pet. 3. 15 indicates "that this epistle was written long after those of Paul."

[10] Epistle written by Simeon, the second bishop of Jerusalem in the time of Trajan.

some doubt on the question of the authenticity of this particular epistle.

The epistle bears on its forefront the claim that it was written by the apostle Peter and the tardiness of its recognition by the church leaders of the first, second, and third centuries would seem to be unfavorable to its genuineness; for if they had believed that it was what it claimed to be, they surely would have accepted it just as readily and just as generally as they did the First Epistle. Chase concludes: "The absolute insufficiency of external evidence creates a presumption against its genuineness, and throws the whole burden of proof on the internal evidence of the epistle itself."[11] We turn then to the epistle to see what light it may have to throw upon the problem of its authorship, and we are surprised to find that in almost every paragraph there are startling phenomena and that both in general and in particular there are marked differences between this epistle and the genuine First Epistle of Peter. We notice these differences next.

II. Differences between First Peter and "Second Peter"

1. The first and most noticeable difference is that of style. "The First Epistle is written in good, easy Greek with few eccentricities. It is free from anything like pseudo-classicalism, is enriched with figures, and has more quotations from the Septuagint woven into its texture than most New Testament books. In 'Second Peter' the Greek is very curious. It was evidently written by a Hebrew, who often limps in his attempts at Greek style. Many of its sentences are involved, its connections are at times obscure, its use of particles is meager, strange expressions are numerous, and there is frequent repetition of phrases and words. Finally,

[11] Chase, *op. cit.*, p. 807.

the Septuagint does not seem to have been laid under special contribution."[12] We quote this judgment concerning the difference of style from one who is disposed to recognize "Second Peter" as a genuine product of the pen of the apostle Peter himself, for we feel sure that such an one would be disposed to minimize rather than exaggerate the difference in style between the two epistles. Yet here is a thoroughgoing recognition of this difference.

The difference of style cannot be accounted for by a difference of date, for if the apostle wrote both epistles, they cannot have been separated from each other by any wide interval of time. It cannot be accounted for by the suggestion of different amanuenses, for there is no indication that an amanuensis has had anything to do with the "Second Epistle." It cannot be accounted for by any radical difference of theme. It has been suggested that the "Second Epistle" is a translation from an Aramaic original, but there is no evidence that this is a fact.

The First Epistle has a smooth and flowing style, while the "Second Epistle" is rugged, eccentric, affected, full of repetitions and tautologies. The First Epistle "is simple and natural and without a trace of self-conscious effort." The "Second Epistle" is "rhetorical and labored and marked by a love of striking and startling expressions." Bigg calls the vocabulary of the First Epistle "dignified" and that of the "Second Epistle" "grandiose." The latter owes more to the dignified English of our versions than any other book in the New Testament. The translation has obscured the grotesqueness of the original at many points and its eccentricities and ambiguities have disappeared in the process of transference to another tongue. It is the one epistle in the New Testament which reads better in the English than in the Greek.

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[12]Falconer, Expositor, VI, vi, p. 47.

It is conceded by almost all scholars that these two epistles cannot have been written by the same man, and those who hold to the genuineness of the "Second Epistle," like Spitta and Zahn, are practically obliged to give up the Petrine authorship of the First Epistle, for they ascribe its composition to Silvanus, under the direction of Peter, and thus attempt to satisfy the demands of the apparent difference of style. There are other differences which strengthen the impression of difference of authorship made by the difference of style.

2. We saw in our study of the First Epistle that there were continuous reminiscences of Peter's own experiences as recorded in the Gospels and the book of Acts. His language recalled various crises in his personal religious development and it seemed to us to reveal his unmistakable personality at every turn. There were no direct assertions of his identity in connection with these phrases, but they were unconscious and seemingly accidental and yet so numerous and so minute that we felt ourselves face to face with the living man and our appreciation of his writing was doubled by our knowledge of the self-revelation so continuously being made in it. When we turn to the "Second Epistle" these unconscious reminiscences utterly fail us, but the author tells us in direct statement who he is. "Simon" or Symeon "Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ," he announces himself in the first verse. "Peter" of the First Epistle has become "Symeon Peter" here. "We were eyewitnesses of his majesty" (1. 16). "This voice we *ourselves* heard come out of heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount" (1. 18). "This is now, beloved, the second epistle that I write unto you" (3. 1). Throughout the "Second Epistle" we have this bald assertion instead of the continuous unconscious self-disclosure of the First Epistle.

3. We naturally would expect one of the twelve apostles in any writing for which he might be responsible to make

frequent reference to the salient facts of the gospel history and doctrines. In First Peter there is ever-recurring reference to the incarnation, the sufferings and death, the resurrection and the ascension of Jesus. In the "Second Epistle" there is not a single allusion to these things, though the subjects handled in the epistle naturally would have suggested them. First Peter is full of reminiscences of the sayings of Jesus. There is only one such reminiscence in "Second Peter," and that may be the repetition of a proverbial phrase rather than a quotation from the parable of Jesus, "the last state is become worse with them than the first" (2. 20).

Peter had seen the incarnate and the resurrected Lord. He had heard the promise of the Paraclete and he had been present at Pentecost. The First Epistle has much to say of prayer and the Holy Spirit and the Christian's personal relation to Christ. It shows an appreciation of the fundamental facts of the Christian faith, such as is natural to one who had associated with Jesus. In the "Second Epistle" there is no mention of the incarnation, crucifixion, or resurrection. There is nothing on the subject of prayer or of the Pentecostal gift of the Spirit, and there is no vivid sense of the aid to be received from the ascended Lord. There is a strange lack of the themes we consider most characteristic of Christianity. At this point, again, the two epistles contrast most strikingly.

4. The phraseology of the Old and New Testament books clearly influences the phraseology of First Peter, but the author of the "Second Epistle" does not show any such familiarity with these books. In their tables of quotations from the Old Testament found in the New Testament Westcott and Hort list thirty-one quotations in First Peter and only five in "Second Peter," and these five are all open to question. The thought of the First Epistle is colored continuously by the language of Isaiah, Proverbs, and Psalms,

as well as by the thought of the Epistles to the Romans and to the Ephesians and the Epistle of James. The "Second Epistle" does not have more than a single allusion to any or all of these, and it never quotes any Old Testament book formally, and possibly it never quotes at all.

5. Another peculiar difference is found in the names applied to Jesus in the two epistles. In the First Epistle we find the names "Christ," "the Christ," or "Jesus Christ." In the "Second Epistle" the names are "our Lord" or "The Lord Jesus Christ the Saviour." The word "Saviour" is not to be found in First Peter, but it occurs five times in the "Second Epistle" and becomes characteristic of its use. Everywhere else in the New Testament the word "Saviour" stands in a predicate relation, as a term descriptive of the work of Christ. In this "Second Epistle" alone it seems to be a title or proper name.

6. Another difference between the epistles is observable in the terms they use for the second coming of the Lord. In First Peter it is called the apocalypse, and in the "Second Epistle" it is the *parousia,* or the day of the Lord. In First Peter it is near at hand, while in the "Second Epistle" it is relegated to the indefinite future. In First Peter it is the time of the glorification of the saints, while in the "Second Epistle" it is represented as the time of the destruction of the world. There was a general expectation of the immediate coming of Christ through all the apostolic age. If the "Second Epistle" had been written by Peter, this postponement of the expectation of the second advent would be very strange indeed. Christians looked for the immediate coming of Christ up to the time of Justin Martyr.

7. The tone of the two letters is markedly different. The First Epistle is apostolic, pastoral, fatherly, dignified, gentle; the "Second Epistle" is prophetic, denunciatory, severe. The First Epistle is full of the calm assurance of faith; the "Second Epistle" is full of anxiety and foreboding.

8. The keynotes of the two epistles are different. In the First the chief emphasis is laid upon hope; in the "Second" it is laid upon knowledge.

9. There is a different relation between the author and the readers assumed in the two epistles. In the First Epistle Peter addresses a definite circle of churches and he tells us where he is when he writes. The address in the "Second Epistle" is of the most indefinite sort, "to them who have obtained a like precious faith with us," and there are no geographical data suggested anywhere in the epistle. In the First Epistle Peter writes as to strangers, but in the "Second Epistle" the author assumes a longstanding acquaintance with his readers and intimates that this acquaintance is to be maintained by means of continued correspondence until his death.

The difference in style is acknowledged by all. It suggests a difference of authorship. Then, when we find that the author of the First Epistle says little or nothing about his personal relation to Jesus while his language and thought are filled with reminiscences of the incidents in which Peter figured in the Gospels and the book of Acts, while the author of the "Second Epistle" calls attention again and again to the things he himself had seen and heard in the company of Jesus, and this conscious asseveration takes the place of the unconscious reminiscence of the First Epistle; when we find a marked difference in their familiarity with the Old Testament and in their quotation from it; when the religious atmosphere and the emphasis upon the fundamentals of the faith clearly distinguish the one from the other; when we find in them different titles for Jesus, and different terms for the second advent, different conceptions of this event, different keynotes, and different relations assumed between the author and the readers, the suggestion of a difference of authorship made by the difference of style seems to be substantiated by all the other internal phenom-

ena and what was a suspicion at first ripens into an almost assured certainty as our study progresses.

We are not surprised to find a modern commentator concluding: "Unless we are prepared to abandon the authorship of First Peter, we cannot claim it for 'Second Peter.' Not only is the tone different, but the expression. What is more unlikely than that the same writer of two letters, near in time, would use a phrase to describe Christianity repeatedly in one and never in the other? That is the case here: in 'Second Peter' 'the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ' is almost invariably used; in First Peter never. Then as regards the doctrine of the two epistles, whereas in First Peter the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord are repeatedly named, and form the center of the gospel, in 'Second Peter' neither is mentioned or alluded to, and instead, the transfiguration is named. Lastly, it would be difficult to trace any substantial resemblance between the teaching of 'Second Peter' and the Petrine sermons in the Acts."[13] We turn next to an inquiry into the literary dependencies of the "Second Epistle."

III. Dependence upon the Epistle of Jude

The parallels between the second chapter of the "Second Epistle" and the short epistle of Jude are so many and so close that all the critics are sure that one has borrowed from the other. They are not so unanimous in their decision as to which is the borrower. Bigg says: "When two writers, whose date cannot be precisely ascertained, are clearly in the position of borrower and lender, the question of priority must turn to a great degree on points of style, and these will always strike different minds in different ways. If the arrangement of the one writer is more logical, and his expression clearer, than those of the other, it may be thought

[13] A. F. Mitchell, Hebrews and Catholic Epistles, p. 65.

either that the first has improved upon the second, or that the second has spoiled the first. The criterion is of necessity highly subjective, and no very positive result will be attained unless we can show that the one has misunderstood the other, that the one uses words which are not only not used by the other, but belong to a different school of thought, or that the one has definitely quoted the other."[14] Upon the basis of these criteria the great majority of the critics are convinced of the priority of the Epistle of Jude. This means, of course, that "Second Peter" has borrowed from Jude.

1. The differing authorities. Luther, always independent in judgment and emphatic in assertion, declared that no one could deny the priority of "Second Peter." Other good authorities have agreed with him here, such as Bengel, Benson, Bigg, Dietlein, Fronmüller, Grotius, Hofmann, Hengstenberg, Lange, Lumby, Mansel, Michaelis, Mill, Plummer, Schaff, Semler, Spitta, Stier, Thiersch, Wetstein, Wolf, Wordsworth, and Zahn. On the other hand, Abbott, Alford, Angus, Bleek, Brückner, Chase, Credner, Davidson, De Wette, Ewald, Eichhorn, Farrar, Guericke, Harnack, Hatch, Herder, Hilgenfeld, Holtzmann, Hug, Huther, Jülicher, Mayerhoff, Mayor, Maier, Moffatt, Neander, Plumptre, Peake, Reuss, Salmon, Schenkel, Sieffert, Weiss, Wiesinger, and others hold to the priority of Jude. Weiss declares there can be no question in the matter. Farrar asserts, "After careful consideration and comparison of the two documents it seems to my own mind impossible to doubt that Jude was the earlier of the two writers."[15] Holtzmann says that at the present day the hypothesis of the priority of "Second Peter" is practically abandoned. Mayor sums up a long discussion of the subject with the statement, "The impression which the epistles leave on my

[14] Bigg, Commentary, p. 216.

[15] Farrar, The Early Days of Christianity, vol. i, p. 196.

mind is that in Jude we have the first thought, in 'Second Peter' the second thought; that we can generally see a reason why 'Peter' should have altered Jude, but very rarely a reason why what we read in 'Peter' should have been altered to what we find in Jude. 'Peter' is more reflective. Jude more spontaneous."[16]

2. Some of the reasons adduced for this conclusion are as follows: (1) "The impious persons of Jude and the false teachers of 'Second Peter' are described by the same characteristics, pictured by the same metaphors, compared with the same Old Testament offenders, warned by the same examples, and threatened with the same retribution; but the writer of 'Second Peter' is less impetuous than Jude, more elaborate and restrained. He omits some things and modifies and softens the language of Jude in certain places. He prefers not to touch upon some rather dubious matters, such as the lust of the angels and the dispute of Michael and Satan over the body of Moses. He also omits Jude's double allusion to a particular form of levitical pollution. He sets aside Jude's quotations from the Book of Enoch and the Assumption of Moses and he gives an ingenious turn to the latter quotation which suggests a scene in the Book of Zechariah."[17]

(2) Some of the passages in "Second Peter" are scarcely intelligible until we turn to Jude for the explanation of them. "Second Peter" has so modified Jude as to leave the meaning obscure. The words are paralleled, but the thought is different and inferior. Their original force seems to have evaporated in transition.

(3) In some cases the sound of the words is reproduced, but not the words themselves. Weiss declares that the "clang" of the words is maintained without their meaning. It is as if "Second Peter" were repeating words heard long

[16] Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. v, p. 225.
Farrar, Messages of the Books, pp. 466, 467.

before or from a distance so that they had not been clearly caught by the ear. Where Jude has *σπιλάδες*, sunken reefs, "Second Peter" has *σπίλοι*, spots. Where Jude has *ἀγάπαις*, love feasts, "Second Peter" has *ἀπάταις*, deceits. Where Jude has *σειραῖς*, chains of darkness, "Second Peter" has *σειροῖς*, pits of darkness. In one place "Second Peter" has improved the bold figure of Jude into more pedantic accuracy, and Jude's *νεφέλαι ἄνυδροι*, clouds without water, has become *πηγαὶ ἄνυδροι*, fountains without water.

(4) Speaking generally it seems more probable that a later writer would appropriate the chief portion of a brief letter and add much to it than that he would appropriate the middle portion of a longer letter and add little or nothing to it.

(5) Jude is original. "Second Peter" is comparatively confused and rhetorical. Jude has the first thought and "Second Peter" the second thought. One can understand how a later writer could work over the vehement and spontaneous style of Jude into something more softened and restrained, but it would be difficult to show any good reason why Jude, if he wished to appeal to the authority of the apostle Peter, should not quote his description of these errorists under the apostle Peter's name; and that he should appropriate the apostle's denunciation and publish it under his own name is unthinkable.[18]

The conclusion that "Second Peter" was borrowing from Jude in this second chapter would be strengthened somewhat if we found that it borrowed from other and later sources. Dr. Edwin A. Abbott is sure that this can be shown.

IV. Dependence upon Josephus

In an article in the Expositor[19] Dr. Abbott pointed out a series of parallels between "Second Peter" and the Antiqui-

[18] Haupt, Studien und Kritiken, 1904, p. 149.

[19] Second Series, vol. iii, p. 49.

ties of Josephus, "such as occur in no other book of Scripture, and such as cannot be accounted for except on the supposition that one of the two writers had seen the work of the other." It does not seem likely that Josephus would quote from this one epistle in the New Testament and show no trace in all his writings of any influence from any other book coming from a Christian or apostolic source. If Josephus did not quote from the epistle, then the epistle has quoted from Josephus, for the parallels prove that they cannot be independent of each other. If the epistle quotes from Josephus, it cannot have been written by Peter, for the Antiquities of Josephus did not appear earlier than A. D. 93, long after the apostle Peter was dead. Moffatt decides: "A number of the coincidences of language and style occur not only in the compass of two short paragraphs of Josephus, but in a sequence and connection which is not dissimilar; and, even after allowance is made for the widespread use of rhetorical commonplaces, these coincidences can hardly be dismissed as fortuitous. Their weight tells in favor of the hypothesis that the author of 'Second Peter' was familiar with Josephus."[20] The reasonableness of this conclusion becomes apparent as we look at the facts.

In the introduction to the Antiquities, Josephus says that Moses considered that the basis of all law was insight into the nature of God, *θεοῦ φύσιν*, that he exhibited God in the possession of his virtue, *ἀρετήν*, that the laws of Moses contain nothing out of harmony with the greatness, *μεγαλειότητος*, of God, that he kept free from myths and legends, though he might have easily cheated men with feigned stories, *πλασμάτων*, for he did not do as other lawgivers who have followed after fables, *μύθοις ἐξακολουθήσαντες*. Compare with this passage the statements found in "Second Peter," "him that called us by his own

[20] Moffatt, Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament, p. 29.

glory and virtue, *ἀρετῆς*,[21] that ye may become partakers of the divine nature, *θείας φύσεως*.[22] For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, *μύθοις ἐξακολουθήσαντες*, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty, *μεγαλειότητος*.[23] Others make merchandise of you with feigned words, *πλαστοῖς λόγοις*."[24]

The word in the Greek for "following after" is not found anywhere else in the New Testament. The word for "fables" is found four times in the Pastoral Epistles, but not elsewhere in the New Testament, and neither the New Testament nor the Septuagint has the words "having followed after fables" combined in the same way as Josephus and this epistle have them. The phrase "the nature of God" is not found in either the New Testament nor the Septuagint, and the expression is altogether alien to New Testament thought. The Greeks might talk about the nature of their gods, but no Christian and no Jew was likely to talk about the "nature" of his God. To them God was a Spirit, and nature stood in contrast to spirit in their thought. The word for "feigned" is not found in the New Testament nor in the Septuagint.

The word "virtue" is found only in Phil. 4. 8 and in this passage in "Second Peter" in the New Testament. The ideal of the New Testament is holiness rather than virtue. "It is so astonishing to find virtue—the cold, human, lower ideal of virtue, as distinct from righteousness and holiness—ascribed to God, that the strangeness of the phrase actually frightened the translators of the Authorized Version into the impossible translation, or, rather, mistranslation, 'who hath called us to glory and virtue,' instead of 'by his own glory and virtue.' "[25] The Revised Versions have corrected it. The old reading was found in Codex Vaticanus, probably altered from the original; but the correct reading was

[21] 1. 3. [22] 1. 4. [23] 1. 16. [24] 2. 3.

[25] Farrar, *op. cit.*, p. 469.

retained in Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Alexandrinus, and Codex Ephraimi Rescriptus. It was natural enough for Josephus to use the word "virtue" as he did, for he was contrasting the virtue of God with the viciousness ascribed to and acknowledged in the heathen deities. From Josephus it seems to have passed over into this epistle.

The indebtedness between the two is found in the use of identical words not found in either the New Testament nor the Septuagint, in the grouping of these words in close juxtaposition, and in the occurrence among them of some very peculiar conceptions. In a single passage in Josephus we find mention made of the power, the virtue, the nature, and the greatness of God, and a protest against the use of feigned words and the following after fables. The same words, phrases, and conceptions are found in a single passage in "Second Peter" and they are not to be found anywhere else in the New Testament.

Compare again the passage in which Josephus records the last utterance of Moses with what purport to be the last words of Peter in this epistle.[26] Both look forward to the time of their departure, and both use the rather rare and peculiar word for it, *ἔξοδος*. Both think it is right, *δίκαιον ἡγοῦμαι*, to warn by the present, *παρούσῃ*, truth. In other passages both Josephus and this epistle supplement the Bible narrative with certain statements in which they agree. They tell us that Noah was a "herald of righteousness" and that Baalam was "rebuked by the ass" rather than by the angel, as in the Pentateuch narrative. These would seem to be indications that the author of this epistle was familiar with the Antiquities of Josephus, and that consciously or unconsciously he was indebted to this book for some of his words, phrases, and conceptions. As he had copied from Jude he also copies from Josephus. Indeed, he seems to be rather prone to copy from others.

[26] Antiquities, iv, 8, 2, and 2 Pet. 1. 12–15.

V. Dependence upon Philo

Philo[27] in commenting upon Gen. 15. 12, "But about sunset a trance fell upon Abraham," declares that this describes the experience of one who is inspired or borne on by God, *θεοφορήτου*, for a prophet uttereth nothing that is his own or private, *ἴδιον*. Human reason must be dormant when the Divine Spirit inspires. Both the reason and the sun are light-bearers, *φωσφορεῖ*; and it is only when the sun sets, only when the human reason is dormant, that the Divine light rises, *ἀνατέλλει*. Compare with this passage "Second Peter" 1. 19-21, in which the author exhorts his readers to give heed to prophecy until the Light-bearer, *φωσφόρος*, may rise, *ἀνατείλῃ*, in their hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of private, *ἰδίας*, interpretation. For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being borne on, *φερόμενοι*, by the Holy Spirit.

Here "Peter" must be interpreted by Philo. Philo declares that the prophet originates nothing of himself and therefore utters nothing of his own or private significance. "Peter" adds that the prophet neither originates nor interprets privately or of himself. The word "light-bearer" is not found anywhere else in the New Testament or in the Septuagint. Neither is the phrase "being borne on," as applied to men, found in these sources. Yet here are all of these unique conceptions found in a single paragraph in Philo and reproduced in "Second Peter." If the author of this epistle copied from Jude and Josephus and Philo, it may be that we will find him reproducing still other sources of his inspiration.

VI. Dependence upon Clement of Rome

In "Second Peter" 1. 17 we read that on the mount of

[27] Quis Rer. Divin. Her., p. 52.

transfiguration witness was borne to Jesus by a voice from the Majestic Glory, *ὑπὸ τῆς μεγαλοπρεπῆς δόξης*. It is a peculiar phrase, not to be found anywhere else in the New Testament; but the exact words are found in the Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians, chapter 9, "those that ministered to his excellent glory," *τῇ μεγαλοπρέπει δόξῃ*. In "Second Peter" 3. 5-7, treating of God's promises, *ἐπαγγελίας*, the author says that the heavens from of old and the earth were compacted by the word of God, but the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire. In a similar passage, Clement, chapter 27, bids us attach ourselves to Him who is faithful to his promises, *ἐπαγγελίαι*, for "in the word of his power he compacted all things and in the word he is able to destroy them." Which of the two is borrowing?

Clement wrote about A. D. 95; Josephus wrote not earlier than A. D. 93. If, as we thought, this epistle quotes from Josephus, then it must have just come into existence if Clement read it and quoted from it. No other Christian writer quotes from this epistle until the end of the second century. It does not seem likely that Clement would have done so, if the epistle never had been heard of until a year or so before his own writing. If the epistle is quoting from Clement, as would seem more probable, then it must have been written after the date of Clement's epistle and long after the death of Peter. In the single passage, 1. 19-21, we find direct parallels to Josephus, Philo, and also the Fourth Book of Esdras, for in Esdras 12. 42 we find the phrase, "a lamp shining in a squalid place." It would seem to be the character of this epistle to borrow from other writers. We can trace its thoughts back in this way to Jude, Josephus, Philo, Clement of Rome, and the Apocrypha.

VII. Dependence upon the Apocalypse of Peter

The Apocalypse of Peter is one of the books which most

nearly achieved a place in the New Testament canon. Some writers knew it and valued it highly, while they seem never to have heard of the "Second Epistle of Peter." Its descriptions of heaven and hell influenced Perpetua and Methodius and Cyril of Jerusalem and Ephraem Syrus and Dante and Milton, and through these much of the thought of the modern world. It is the ultimate source of the belief that each sin receives its corresponding and appropriate punishment in some special province of hell. It is about the length of the Epistle to the Galatians. It claims to be a revelation made by Jesus while sitting upon the Mount of Olives and surrounded by the apostles, for whom Peter speaks. It was read and reverenced by many Christians in Rome and in Africa and in the East.

The Muratorian Fragment said, "The Apocalypses of John and Peter only do we receive, which latter some among us would not have read in the church." Eusebius tells us that Clement of Alexandria gave abridged accounts of all the canonical books and also of the Epistle of Barnabas and the Apocalypse of Peter. Eusebius brands the latter book as spurious, even as many declared the Apocalypse of John to be. However, Methodius called it "divinely inspired Scripture," and Sozomen, in the middle of the fifth century, informs us that the Apocalypse of Peter was read on Good Friday of each year in certain churches of Palestine "up to the present day."

The Apocalypse of Peter was written before the middle of the second century, and it became quite popular and enjoyed a wide circulation through the church. At one time it bade fair to be declared canonical, but ultimately it was rejected and then was lost to the knowledge of the later days. In 1886 a fragment of this lost Apocalypse was discovered in an ancient burying place in Akhmim in Upper Egypt. It is in the original Greek and is now in the Gizeh museum. It was published in 1892. In 1910 a translation

of the complete Apocalypse was published in France. The translation was made from an Ethiopic manuscript found in the remarkable Ethiopic library of D'Abbadie at Paris, whose treasures had been brought to Europe after the Abyssinian war of 1868. It was seen at once that here we had a document very much like our "Second Epistle of Peter." The two writings are alike in style, phraseology, and thought. They evidently belong to the same author or to the same school. Salmon says that the agreements between the two manuscripts "are more than accidental."[28] Sanday concludes that the resemblances are so marked as to prove that the two writings are nearly connected.[29] Harnack and Jülicher think that "Second Peter" quotes from the Apocalypse of Peter.[30] Kühl thinks that the second chapter of the epistle was written by the same hand that wrote the Apocalypse.

We have seen that we have no evidence that the "Second Epistle of Peter" was admitted to the Bible of either the Eastern or the Western church in either the first or the second century. For more than two hundred years the Christians did not seem to consider it canonical. All the other books of our New Testament were recognized within this period. "Second Peter" alone was left out. We have seen how this epistle differs in style from that of the genuine Epistle of Peter and how many other indications there are of different authorship in the different terms and titles and conceptions and emphases, in the keynotes and relations and general atmosphere of the two productions. We have noticed the manifest tendency in "Second Peter" to conscious or unconscious quotation and its seeming dependence upon Philo and Paul and Jude and Josephus and Esdras and Clement of Rome and the Apocalypse of Peter.

[28] Salmon, Introduction, p. 591.
[29] Sanday, Inspiration, p. 347.
[30] Harnack, Chronologie, p. 471.

The universal rejection of this "Second Epistle of Peter" in contrast with the universal reception of the First Epistle of Peter as a genuine product of the apostle's pen, the manifest differences between the two in tone and style and content, the dependence of "Second Peter" upon not only earlier but also some of the later books, would all point to the conclusion that "Second Peter" must have come into existence long after the First Epistle of Peter was written, and possibly not until the first Christian century had passed. There are other indications in the epistle of a late origin which we notice in addition to those we have mentioned.

VIII. Other Indications of Late Origin

1. We are inclined to rank first among these the author's overanxiety to identify himself with the apostle Peter. He sets up a claim to apostolic authority and tries to make it good by repeated assertion. Weakest in attestation, this epistle is loudest in protestation. It lays itself liable to the suspicion that it protests too much. It shares this characteristic with the Gospel according to Peter, an apocryphal Gospel written in the latter half of the second century, a fragment of which has been discovered in a Christian grave at Akhmim in Egypt after lying there undisturbed for a thousand years. There was a somewhat extensive literature in the early church, falsely ascribed to Peter. Serapion, at the end of the second century, found the Gospel according to Peter in use in Rhossus in Cilicia, and he allowed it for some time, as the book seemed to him to be on the whole orthodox, although he pronounced it to be unauthentic. He says, "We receive both Peter and the other apostles as Christ; but as experienced men we reject the writings falsely ascribed with their names, since we know that we did not receive such from our fathers."[31]

[31] Eusebius, *op. cit.*, vi, 12. 3.

The Gospel according to Peter is filled with direct assertions of apostolic authority, and it was published under the name of Peter, but Serapion rightly rejected it because it had no attestation from antiquity. If he had found the "Second Epistle of Peter" in use in his diocese, he undoubtedly would have rejected it for the same reason. Direct claims prove nothing, unless they have the backing of the facts. The facts both of external and internal attestation wholly fail us in the case of the Gospel according to Peter and in the case of the Apocalypse of Peter. Do they not fail us just as completely in the case of this "Second Epistle of Peter"? With no backing of patristic testimony there is no lacking of persistent asseveration. There had been no need of this in the First Epistle of Peter. Its unconscious allusions proved its authenticity on every page. On every page of the "Second Epistle of Peter" we find something to suggest a question or suspicion of the authorship so stoutly affirmed at every point. Over against these direct claims we array the testimony of the epistle itself.

2. Would Peter have spoken about the *parousia* in the terms used in this epistle? At the time of its writing there seems to be widespread doubt concerning the immediate coming of the Lord, and there are many who mock at its delay. Was that ever true in the days of Peter? Does it not suggest a much later date?

3. At the time of the writing of the First Epistle of Peter a fiery persecution was trying the fortitude of the church and the apostle exhorts to patient endurance of these outward trials. At the time of the writing of the "Second Epistle" the situation seems changed. The danger is no longer from without, but, rather, from within. All the warnings are against heretics and disturbers of the peace of the church from among the ranks of its own followers. In the description of these heretics and their heresies there is a strange mixture of present and future tenses (3. 3, 5),

which suggest that the writer is living in the midst of the things which he is describing and at the same time is attempting to put himself back into the apostolic days and picture them as future. He assumes the character of a prophet, but inadvertently drops the disguise at certain places. He says that many shall follow the false teachers and they shall make merchandise of the people, and then he adds that their sentence lingers not and their destruction slumbers not (2. 2, 3). He says that in the last days mockers shall come, saying, "Where is the hope of his coming?" and then he adds, "For this they willfully forget," instead of "For this they will forget," which would be the natural phrase if this were real prophecy.

4. In 3. 1, 2 the author says that he writes the second epistle as he wrote the first, to help them to remember the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and the commandment of the Lord and Saviour "through your apostles." Does not this last phrase sound a little queerly, coming from Peter's pen? Would not Peter have said, "through us, the apostles of the Lord"? Does not the phrase "your apostles" seem rather objective as though it were used by one to whom the apostles, like the holy prophets, belonged to a generation past and gone?

5. This suggestion is strengthened by the statement found in 3. 4, "From the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were." The fathers evidently are the fathers in the Christian Church, and the reference, therefore, must be to the earliest generations of Christians. Such a reference would be altogether unsuitable to Peter's lifetime. It must belong to a much later date.

6. In 1. 18 the mount of the transfiguration is called "the holy mount." In the Gospel according to Matthew and in the Epistle to the Hebrews we read of the holy temple and of the Holy Place and of the Holy of holies in the temple, but these are Jewish phrases reproducing the Old Testament

faith. The whole genius of the New Testament is opposed to the recognition of any exclusively holy place. It heralds the era in which the Father is to be worshiped neither in Mount Gerizim nor in Mount Zion nor in any other holy mount set apart exclusively for that purpose. It proclaims the truth that God can be worshiped acceptably in any and every place in spirit and in truth. In accordance with this principle there is no trace in the New Testament outside of this passage of any tendency among the Christians to attach any special reverence to any locality because of its connection with the life of the Lord. As one result of this fact there is not a single spot in Palestine to-day upon which we can be sure that Jesus ever stood. It was only in the later days when all sure traditions concerning them had been buried with the first believers that places began to be called holy, and pilgrimages began to be made to them. There were no holy mounts in apostolic times. There were no holy places or localities to the early Christians. They had their blessed memories and their sacred associations everywhere. The localization of holy places belongs to the later generations, and this appellation of "the holy mount" in this single passage in our New Testament marks it as belonging to a later date than any of the other New Testament books. In the Apocalypse of Peter there is a vision granted to the disciples on "the holy mountain," and there is "a voice from heaven" in the narrative, and it may be that the author of this epistle has taken both phrases from this source.

7. In 3. 16 there is a reference to Paul's epistles which parallels them with the "other scriptures" of the Old Testament as of equal canonical authority. Were Paul's epistles collected in Peter's lifetime? Were they recognized as canonical and put on a par with the sacred writings of the Hebrew Scriptures in Peter's lifetime? Moffatt says, "This allusion to a collection of Pauline epistles is an anachronism

which forms an indubitable water-mark of the second century, and which is corroborated by the allusion to 'your apostles' in 3. 2, where the context, with its collocation of prophets and apostles, reflects the second-century division of Scripture into these two classes."[32] The passage is without parallel in our New Testament and it bears witness to a degree of canonicity which is impossible in the apostolic age.

8. Some of the words used in this epistle bear testimony to its late origin. In 2. 22 there are the words, *ἐξέραμα*, "evacuation," and *κυλισμόν*, "wallowance," neither of which can be found anywhere in Greek literature until long after the death of the apostle Peter. The earliest occurrence of the former is in Dioscorides, about A. D. 100, and the earliest occurrence of the latter is in the second century. In 3. 10 there is the word *καυσούμενα*, "in fever-heat," which has been found only in two medical writers, Dioscorides, A. D. 100, and Galen, A. D. 160. Is there any reason to think that the apostle Peter would have used any such rare words found only in later medical works? Is not their occurrence in the epistle a proof that it was written some time in the later days when these words had come into medical use?

The late attestation of the epistle would find its sufficient explanation in its late origin. Its late origin is attested by its dependence upon writings like those of Josephus and Clement of Rome and the Apocalypse of Peter. Other indications of its late origin are to be found in its use of rare second-century words and its reference to the Pauline Epistles as canonical scripture, and its allusions to "the holy mount" and to "your apostles" and to "the fathers who have fallen asleep." These all belong to the second-century development of church literature and history.

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[32] Moffatt, *op. cit.*, pp. 363–4.

IX. Peculiarities of Doctrine

There are two peculiarities of doctrine in this epistle which we ought to notice before coming to our final conclusions concerning it. 1. There is a peculiar doctrine as to the creation of the world. The author says, "There were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the word of God" (3. 5). This looks like a thoroughgoing adoption of the natural philosophy of Thales of Miletus, who taught that water was the source of all things, the material principle out of which all things were created. Thales has been called the founder of the Greek philosophy because he first exhibited a scientific rather than a mythical tendency in the explanation of the phenomena of the natural world. Since the seed of all things was naturally moist and the nutriment of all things was moist, and seashells were found on the tops of the mountains, Thales concluded that water was the primal material principle, and that the earth was compacted out of water, and through water all things came into being and life. It was a first crude guess at the secret of the universe, and it was soon outgrown in the Greek philosophy, and it would be a disappointment to find this discarded philosophical theorem revived and given a place in the inspired scriptures of our New Testament.

2. The peculiar doctrine of the creation of the world finds its counterpart in a peculiar doctrine of the destruction of the world. The author goes on to say, "The heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire" (3. 7), and he explains what he means when he declares, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up," and again, "The heavens being on

fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat," 3. 10, 12. Here again we have a doctrine of the Greek philosophy, represented by the contemporaneous Stoicism, and not to be found anywhere else in our New Testament. It is set forth in detail in the Apocalypse of Peter, from which the author of this epistle may have taken it. It may be true, but shall we feel any compulsion to believe it on the single authority of an epistle bearing so many marks of a second-century origin? The epistle may be as far astray at this point as we believe it to be in the promulgation of the old Thalesian doctrine of the creation of the world from water. We incline to hope that the only authority behind both of these doctrines is that of the Greek philosophy, and that apostolic inspiration or guarantee may be denied to them on the ground that this epistle is not genuine.

If it is genuine, how can we explain the fact that it differs from the First Epistle of Peter in style, and topics, and in the fate of its reception? While the First Epistle became rapidly known throughout the church, why is this epistle not mentioned until the close of the second century? If it is genuine, how does it happen that in the Bibles of the Eastern and the Western churches in the second century all the other books of our New Testament can be found and this one epistle is excluded? If it is genuine, how do we explain its literary dependencies, its many internal indications of late origin, and its peculiar second-century theological doctrines? It is small wonder that the relative lack of external attestation and the absolute abundance of internal perplexities have led the majority of modern scholars to decide that in this epistle we have a pseudepigraphon published some time in the second century under the name of Peter, just as the Apocalypse of Peter and the Gospel according to Peter were. We quote some of the conclusions of the authorities.

X. Conclusion of Various Scholars

1. John Calvin declares, "The majesty of the Spirit of Christ exhibits itself in every part of this epistle." Nevertheless he was uncertain as to its authenticity because of the "discrepancies between it and the First" Epistle. Others are equally impressed with the beauty and power of the epistle, as, for example:

2. Farrar, who says, "Whatever may be the ultimate verdict concerning its direct authenticity, it will remain to the end of time a writing full of instruction which is undoubtedly superior to all the writings of the second and third centuries."[33] Farrar believes this although he is dubious as to its genuineness.

3. On the contrary, Edwin A. Abbott is disposed to value the literary merit of the epistle rather slightly. He says, "By vulgar pomposity, verbose pedantry, and barren plagiarism this document is distinguishable from every other book of the New Testament."[34]

4. Weiss is uncertain what to conclude concerning the authenticity of the epistle. He prefers to be noncommittal on that subject. He ends by saying, "The possibility that the epistle is on the whole what it claims to be and that circumstances unknown to us alone prevented its recognition before the third century need not be excluded nor the question of the genuineness be declared definitely settled."[35]

5. Plummer is a trifle more decided. He says, "The objections to the epistle are such that if the duty of fixing the canon of the New Testament had fallen upon us, we should scarcely have ventured on the existing evidence to include the epistle, but they are not such as to warrant us in reversing the decision of the fourth century which had

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[33] Farrar, Messages of the Books, p. 471.

[34] Expositor, Second Series, vol. iii, p. 215.

[35] Weiss, Introduction, vol. ii, p. 174.

evidence we have not."[36] What proof is there of this assertion that the fourth century had evidence we have not? We know of none. The larger probability in the case is that the fourth century did not demand the evidence we should demand in such a case. The church of the fourth century was not a critical church, and it neither had nor cared to have the critical apparatus we demand and have in hand in the twentieth century. If a contrast need be made, we would be ready to claim a greater critical authority for the church of the twentieth century than for the church of the fourth century. Therefore we sympathize more fully with the position of the authorities which follow.

6. Professor Sheldon declares of this epistle, "Until its claims are more clearly established, it cannot prudently be treated as an apostolic writing."[37]

7. At the close of his excellent discussion of the subject in Hastings's Dictionary of the Bible, Chase decides: "Too many independent lines of evidence converge toward one result to allow of hesitation. The only conclusion which is in accordance with the evidence, external and internal, is that 'Second Peter' is not the work of the apostle."[38]

8. Adeney agrees, "Weakly attested by the Fathers, always the most doubtful book in the New Testament, there is little to be said in answer to the strong objections against it, and the balance seems to be in favor of denying its genuineness."[39]

9. Jülicher asserts, "The pseudonymous character of no other New Testament writing is so clearly proved as is that of 'Second Peter,' and in no other case is it recognized by so many even of the extremely conservative critics. 'Second Peter' is without doubt the last portion of the New Testa-

[36] Books of the Bible, vol. ii, p. 293.
[37] Sheldon, System of Christian Doctrine, p. 128.
[38] Vol. iii, p. 816.
[39] Adeney, A Biblical Introduction, p. 449.

ment to be written, and it has the least right to be in the canon."[40]

10. As one example of the judgment of one of the most conservative critics we quote the statement of Godet: "The epistle must be excluded, if not from the canon, at least from the number of genuine apostolical works."

11. Finally, with fullest approbation we cite the conclusion of Bishop Lightfoot: "The deficiency of external evidence forbids the use of 'Second Peter' in controversy."[41]

The trouble with many pious minds is that they cannot reconcile the appropriation of an authoritative name with fundamental honesty of character. They are ready to say, "If the writer was not the apostle Peter, he was a false teacher, a corrupter of others, and a hypocrite, which seems incredible to us."[42] The ethics of such a literary appropriation was not quite the same in ancient times as with us. At least the whole of the uncanonical apocalyptical literature of both the pre-Christian and the Christian centuries was published by seemingly pious people with the best of motives, but always under falsely assumed names. It seems to have been an accepted and allowable literary device in those days. However, all these books are and always have been uncanonical; and if the "Second Epistle of Peter" has followed their example in borrowing the authority of the name of one of the ancient worthies we might conclude upon that basis that it ought to be considered uncanonical too, for it would be "a forgery pseudonymous and pseudepigraphic, with no more right to be in the New Testament than has the Apocalypse of Peter or the romance of the Shepherd of Hermas."[43]

In all probability the book will remain in our New Testa-

[40] Jülicher, Einleitung, s. 152.

[41] Lightfoot, Epistle to the Galatians, p. 335.

[42] International Standard Bible Encyclopædia, p. 2355.

[43] *Op. cit.*, p. 2355.

ment until the end of time. The proof of its unauthenticity always will fall short of a complete demonstration to many minds. Its felicities of expression in the English translation and its genuinely religious tone and its devotional and doctrinal formulations will appeal to many pious souls, and they would feel that they had suffered a serious loss if the book ever should be removed from the New Testament by any authoritative ecclesiastical action. It has established its right to a place in the canon, most people will think, by the centuries of its occupancy. They will feel like saying: "Let it stay where it is. It will do no harm. To attempt to remove it would stir up controversy. If anybody can get any good out of it, allow them that privilege. If you doubt its genuineness, you need not use it in any doctrinal debate; but all can derive spiritual benefit from its pages." Probably such conclusions always will prevail.

XI. Place of Writing, Date, and Destination

The epistle itself tells us nothing explicitly concerning these things. It must have been written before the time of Clement of Alexandria, and he seems to consider it as a writing closely related to the Apocalypse of Peter. It is generally believed that the Apocalypse of Peter was written in Egypt, and it may be that "Second Peter" also was written there. The probable date was some time in the second century. Strachan says from A. D. 100-115 and Harnack says from A. D. 160-175. The majority of the critics would set the date about the middle of the second century. Among these we may name Bleek, Chase, Davidson, Hilgenfeld, Holtzmann, Jacoby, Renan, and Von Soden.

Moffatt inclines to agree with these, and he says, "To sum up: in the strictest sense of the term, 'Second Peter' is a Catholic Epistle, addressed to Christendom in general; it may be defined as a homily thrown into epistolary guise, or a pastoral letter of warning and appeal. . . . The evi-

dence is too insecure to point decisively to Egypt rather than to Syro-Palestine or even Asia Minor as the place of its origin. Indications of its date or soil are not to be expected in the case of this or of any pseudepigraphon. 'The real author of any such work had to keep himself altogether out of sight, and its entry upon circulation had to be surrounded with a certain mystery, in order that the strangeness of its appearance at a more or less considerable interval after the putative author's death might be concealed.' "[44]

To believe that a pseudepigraphon has been admitted into the company of the New Testament books will distress the faith of some people. To others it will seem a small matter, for they are disposed to consider the most of the New Testament literature as coming under this category. However, our faith ought to rest most comfortably only on the basis of facts. The facts have shown that all the other New Testament books were regarded as canonical by early Christians, when this epistle was not. If the Christians of the first two centuries found the Bible a sufficient rule for faith and practice without this epistle, so could we, if we felt that it were necessary to do so.

[44] Moffatt, Introduction, pp. 368–369.

PART V

THE EPISTLE OF JUDE

THE EPISTLE OF JUDE

The epistle of Jude is a very short epistle of only twenty-five verses in our version, but in this short space it exhibits some very noteworthy peculiarities. We note these first of all.

I. Peculiarities

1. Triple Arrangement. Dean Farrar has pointed out that Jude has an extraordinary fondness for triple arrangements. "In pausing to tell us that Enoch is the seventh from Adam he at once shows his interest in sacred numbers, and throughout his epistle he has scarcely omitted a single opportunity of throwing his statements into groups of three. Thus those whom he addresses are sanctified, kept, elect, (verse 1), and he wishes them mercy, love, peace (verse 2); the instances of divine retribution are the Israelites in the wilderness, the fallen angels, and the cities of the plain (verses 5-7); the dreamers whom he denounces are corrupt, rebellious, and railing (verse 8); they have walked in the way of Cain, Baalam, and Korah (verse 11); they are murmurers, discontented, self-willed (verse 16); they are boastful, partial, greedy of gain (verse 16); they are separatists, egotistic, unspiritual (verse 19). Lastly, they are to be dealt with in three classes, of which one class is to be refuted in disputation, another saved by effort, and the third pitied with detestation of their sins (verses 22, 23). But saints are to pray in the spirit, keep themselves in the love of God, and await the mercy of Christ (verses 20-21) and glory is ascribed to God before the past, in the present, and unto the farthest future (verse 25). . . . The recurrence of this arrangement no less than eleven times in twenty-five verses is obviously intentional, or, at any rate,

characteristic of the writer's mode of thought. It could not be paralleled from any other passage of Scripture of equal length."[1]

Canon Maclear is sure that the epistle "is modeled throughout on a careful plan—bordering on the artificial—the main divisions, subdivisions, and instances all being arranged on a threefold system.

A. *Preface,* verses 1-4.

I. Salutation, verses 1, 2.

II. Object of the letter, verse 3.

III. Reason for this object, verse 4.

B. *Warnings,* verses 5-19.

I. Three instances of Divine punishment for corporate wickedness applied to the case of the libertines against whom Jude writes, verses 5-10.

1. The rebellious Israelites in the wilderness, verses 5, 8.
2. The unfaithful angels in contrast to the faithful, verses 6, 9.
3. The sensual cities of the plain, verses 7, 10.

II. Three instances of individual wickedness illustrating the sins of these evildoers, verse 11.

1. Cain, illustrating disobedience.
2. Baalam, illustrating greed.
3. Korah, illustrating railing.

III. Three vivid descriptions of these latest rebels, with three tokens by which their condemnation may be evident, verses 12-19.

1. Illustration of their state by images from Nature, verses 12, 13; to be recognized from its agreement with the words of Enoch, verses 14, 15.

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[1] Farrar, Early Days of Christianity, pp. 153–154.

2. By their base thoughts and language, verse 16; fulfilling the prophecies of the Apostles, verses 17, 18.
3. By their unfaithful conduct, attested by their lack of spirituality, verse 19.

C. *Exhortations,* verses 20-25.

I. As to themselves, verses 20, 21, let his readers be firm in:
1. Faith, verse 20.
2. Love, verse 21a.
3. Hope, verse 21b.

II. With reference to the libertines, verses 22, 23, let the faithful treat:
1. Some of them with gentle measures, verse 22.
2. Others with strong remedies, verse 23a.
3. But all their sins with utter disapproval, verse 23b.

III. As regards God: Doxology, verses 24, 25, let all join in thanks to him for:
1. His support against similar falling away, verse 24a.
2. His grace in sanctification, verse 24b.
3. His wisdom in overruling everything, verse 25."[2]

This thoroughgoing triple classification of the material of the epistle bears witness either to a remarkably dominant characteristic of the author or to an equally remarkable ingenuity of the analyst.

2. **Peculiar Expressions.** Thayer gives a list of twenty words and phrases peculiar to Jude among the New Testament writers, twenty in twenty-five verses. There are only eleven in the three epistles of John, only seventy-three in the much longer epistle of James, only sixty-three in First

[2] Book by Book, pp. 203–204.

Peter, and only fifty-seven in "Second Peter," so that among the Catholic Epistles the Epistle of Jude is peculiar for the unusual number of new and strange expressions found in so small a space.

3. Apocryphal Quotations. The Epistle of Jude is the only New Testament book which quotes from one of the apocryphal books by name. In verse 14 the Book of Enoch is cited and in verse 6 there is a reference to the fall of the angels through lust for mortal women, the chief authority for which is to be found in this same Book of Enoch. In verse 9 there is a reference to the story of the conflict between Michael and Satan for the body of Moses, and Origen and Didymus and Apollinaris of Laodicea all vouch for the fact that this narrative was found in the apocryphal Assumption of Moses. The church has made the Epistle of Jude canonical and it has not made the Book of Enoch and the Assumption of Moses canonical.

It follows that a canonical book may quote from uncanonical sources, and that it may quote traditions in which there is a large element of mythology if not of absolute untruth. Did the angels fall through lust for mortal women? Most of us would be willing to say that we hope not and that we believe not. Did the archangel Michael ever contend with Satan for the body of Moses? Most of us feel sure that he never did. If Jude's only authority for these statements is to be found in these apocryphal and uninspired books, the mere fact that he quotes them does not guarantee their truthfulness. He probably believed these tales to be true and these apocryphal books to be good authorities for them, but it does not follow that we need to believe either the truth of the tales or the validity of these authorities.

Paul gives us the names of the two Egyptian magicians who withstood Moses before Pharaoh, although these names are not to be found in the Old Testament, and his only authority for them doubtless was to be found in the current

and utterly untrustworthy tradition. Both Stephen and Paul tell us that the giving of the law was mediated through angels, though there is nothing said about that fact in the book of Exodus. Paul alludes to the tradition of the rolling rock which followed the Israelites in their wilderness wandering, and Stephen repeats the tradition that Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews makes reference to the tradition concerning the martyrdom of Isaiah, and both Jesus and James tell us that the drought in the time of Elijah was three and a half years long.[3] After the time of Antiochus Epiphanes that period of three and a half years, the broken seven, had become symbolical of any time of distress and trial. Tradition had applied it to the time of the drought, and Jesus and James adopt the traditional statement of the case, although the Old Testament account, the only authority on the subject, expressly limits the drought to less than three years.

The inspiration of all of these men was consistent, therefore, with their quotation from uninspired and unauthoritative sources of statements which were neither literally nor typically true. Let us look more closely at these apocryphal authorities quoted by Jude.

II. The Apocryphal Authorities

1. **The Book of Enoch.** This was originally written in Hebrew. Later it was translated into Greek, and only a few fragments of this version have been preserved. The book was known to Irenæus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Augustine, Jerome, and others of the church Fathers. Among these Tertullian alone thought that it ought to be regarded as a canonical book, and his two chief reasons for coming to that conclusion were that it witnessed to

[3] 2 Tim. 3. 8; Acts 7. 38; Gal. 3. 19; 1 Cor. 10. 4; Acts 7. 22; Heb. 11. 37; Luke 4. 25; Jas. 5. 17.

Christ and that it was quoted by "the apostle Jude."[4] Origen declared that it was uncanonical and of doubtful value.[5] Augustine,[6] Jerome[7] and Chrysostom spoke of the story of the angels and the daughters of men as a baseless fable. Jerome says that many doubted the authenticity and the authority of the Epistle of Jude because it quoted from such an apocryphal source. We can trace the progress of critical thought on this matter from Tertullian to Jerome. Tertullian was willing to make the Book of Enoch canonical because "the apostle Jude" quoted from it. In Jerome's day many were ready to decide that the Epistle of Jude could not be canonical because Jude quoted from this apocryphal book.

With the exception of the few fragments mentioned above, the Book of Enoch was lost to the modern world until the year 1773, when the African explorer Bruce brought back from Abyssinia a copy of an Ethiopic version which had been made from the Greek probably about A. D. 600. It seems to be of composite authorship. It is falsely ascribed. It begins with the statement that Moses in his hundred and twentieth year handed it to Joshua with the Pentateuch. However, there is general agreement among the scholars that it was composed at different periods in the second and the first centuries before the Christian era. It contains the passage quoted by Jude. It tells how two hundred angels came down to earth and were led astray by their desire for the very beautiful daughters of men and begat a race of giants and taught them sorcery and other corrupting arts, and how Enoch was commissioned by the Almighty to tell these "watchers of heaven, who have deserted the lofty sky, and their holy everlasting station, who have been polluted with women" that their sentence would be to be bound for seventy generations underneath the earth, till the day of

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[4] De cultu fem. I, iii.
[5] Contra Cels., V, liv.
[6] De Civ. Dei, XV, xxiii, 4.
[7] De Vir. Illustr. iv.

their judgment when they shall be thrown into the lowest depths of the fire, and be shut up forever (Enoch 10. 15, 16). Later Enoch was shown their punishment in a vision and he was told, "This is the prison of the angels; and here are they kept forever" (21. 6).

The latest editor of the Book of Enoch, R. H. Charles, says of it, "The influence of Enoch on the New Testament has been greater than that of all the other apocryphal and pseudepigraphical books taken together."[8] Some twenty-four coincidences have been pointed out between the Book of Enoch and the Apocalypse of John, and some twenty-one coincidences between this book and the Gospels according to Matthew, Luke, and John. Traces of its influence can be found in the book of Acts, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Pauline Epistles, the Epistle of Peter and "Second Peter." It seems to have been known to the authors of all of these books as well as to the two brothers, Jesus and Jude.

2. **The Assumption of Moses.** This book had some circulation in the early Christian Church. It is quoted by Clement of Alexandria and Origen and others. It was included in the stichometry of Nicephorus, and he gave it one thousand four hundred stichoi, which would make it about the same size as the Apocalypse of John. The book had been lost sight of for many centuries when, in 1861, about one third of it was discovered in a palimpsest in the Ambrosian library at Milan. This portion does not contain the story of the conflict between Michael and Satan, so that we have to depend upon the authority of the church Fathers as to Jude's quotation of it from this source.

The book is very interesting to us because it was written in all probability during our Lord's lifetime, and there are so many parallels between the eschatological discourses of

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[8] Charles, The Book of Enoch, p. 41.

Jesus as recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and the description of the signs of the end of the world as given in this book that it would seem that Jesus as well as Jude must have been acquainted either with the book itself or with the current traditions and theology to which it gave expression. Since the references in Jude are so direct, the former supposition would seem the more probable one. The book seems to have suggested some of the phrases used by Stephen in his defense before the Sanhedrin and some of the language of "Second Peter." In view of the fact that Jesus and Jude and Stephen seem to have been acquainted with the book and influenced by it, it is rather noteworthy that no parallel with it can be adduced from the Apocalypse of John.

These apocryphal books were early renounced by the Jews. They had a somewhat longer vogue among the Christians but at last they were rejected as unauthoritative and filled with corrupting and blasphemous tales. In so far as the apocalyptical language of Jesus and of the New Testament was influenced by them, it would seem to be justifiable now to conclude that it belongs to a species of literature which has been discredited and discarded, and that whatever message it may have had for the first Christian generations it has neither comforting nor illuminating message for us. It represents no inspired authority, even though its phrases were adopted by Jesus and its stories and prophecies were believed and quoted by Jude.

Of the Epistle of Jude it has been said, It "certainly presents more surprising phenomena than any other book of the New Testament. It is in many respects altogether unique."[9] We have mentioned three of these surprising phenomena, its unique expressions, its triple arrangement, and its quotation of apocryphal authorities. Of the three

[9] Farrar, Messages of the Books, p. 450.

the last would seem to be the most surprising. We turn now to some of the more general characteristics of the book.

III. General Characteristics

1. Poetic Feeling. Jude has something of the love of nature and of the touch of poetry in his composition which we notice in Jesus and James, his brothers. He has seen and appreciated the flying clouds, wind-swept and waterless, giving a promise of rain which never came. He has noted the damaged orchard after a tornado had uprooted its trees and their autumn fruitlessness and their future hopelessness had seemed to him a fit symbol of those defilers of the Christian feasts whose life had been fruitless and whose destruction seemed to be final. He had watched the sea waves washing up the sewerage and the refuse of some city on its filthy shore. He had been startled by some meteor's flight across the Palestinian plain, and it had seemed to him that its momentary illumination was followed by even a greater blackness of darkness than before. Its feeble and fleeting light made the following darkness seem abiding and eternal. There is enough of this allusion to natural phenomena in the epistle to show that Jude had a measure at least of the poetic insight and feeling displayed by his brothers.

2. Literary Merit. Origen declared that though the epistle was of but few lines, it was "full of powerful words of heavenly grace."[10] Adam Clarke says: "This epistle contains some very sublime and nervous passages. From the tenth to the thirteenth verses inclusive the description of the false teachers is bold, happy, energetic. The exhortation of verses twenty and twenty-one is both forcible and affectionate. The doxology, verses twenty-four and twenty-five, is peculiarly dignified and sublime." This doxology is one of

[10] Matt., tom. X, 17, on Matt. 13. 55.

the finest in the New Testament. The epistle throughout has a vigorous and original style. Its vocabulary is unusually rich.

3. Sternness of Tone. Its tone is severe and denunciatory, for it is a note of warning against certain individuals whose pernicious activity was endangering the church. This epistle almost deserves to rank with the Great Denunciation recorded in the twenty-third chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew. It shows Jude a true brother to Jesus in his vehemence of denunciation when it seemed to him that the occasion demanded the unqualified truth. Jude calls these libertines who have crept into the church traitors and spies, deniers of the Christ and perverters of God's grace, faultfinders, sycophants, hypocrites and liars, schismatics and sensualists. He likens them to Cain and Baalam and Korah and the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah and the lost angels. He does not spare them at any point.

As Jesus pronounced the great invective against the scribes and Pharisees, and as James denounced the woes upon the selfish rich in his epistle, this younger brother Jude uses the most forceful language at his command in his description of the impudent and devilish detractors and apostates who were threatening the peace and the life of the Christian Church. Moffatt calls the epistle "a sort of fiery cross to rouse the churches."[11] Jude says that he had had it in mind to write a treatise on the subject of the Common Salvation, but the emergency seemed so great that he substitutes this short epistle. The body of the epistle has little interest for us because it has to do with men and circumstances long passed away, but the beginning and the ending of the epistle have a timeless and universal appeal, and they show how much we have lost in that Jude did not write on that more congenial theme.

[11] Moffatt, Introduction, p. 358.

IV. The Author

The epistle purports to have been written by "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James." "Jude" was a very common name among the Jews. It had had its exceeding honor and it was to have its exceeding shame. Judas Maccabeus was the national hero of the later Jewish history, a patriot without a peer. Judas Iscariot was to stand pilloried forever in world history as the traitor to the highest and best of the human race. There are six Judes mentioned in the New Testament. 1. Judas of Galilee, a revolutionary leader who perished before any one of our New Testament books was written. 2. Judas of Straight Street, Damascus, with whom Paul lodged after his vision and conversion, but otherwise unknown to us. 3. Judas Barsabbas, who was sent with Silas as the official representative of the Jerusalem council to the church at Antioch. 4. Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, a traitor in Gethsemane and a suicide after the sad event of the betrayal had become assured. We have no reason to think that any one of these four had anything to do with the writing of this epistle.

Some have thought that the next Jude in our list was its author. 5. There was a Jude who was one of the twelve apostles, according to the two apostolical lists given by Luke, one in the Gospel and one in the book of Acts.[12] This Jude is distinguished from Judas Iscariot in one passage in the Gospel according to John and he is said to have asked Jesus a question about his manifestation to the disciples and not to the world.[13] We are told nothing more about him anywhere in the New Testament. In the other two apostolical lists, found in the Gospel according to Matthew and the Gospel according to Mark,[14] Jude's name does not occur, but the name "Thaddæus with the surname of Lebbæus"

[12] Luke 6. 16. Acts 1. 13. [13] John 14. 22.
[14] Matt. 10. 2. Mark 3. 16.

takes its place. These two, Jude and Thaddæus, are supposed, therefore, to be identical.

In the Authorized Version in Luke's two lists of the apostles the name reads "Jude the brother of James," but that was a mistranslation of the Greek and was intended to identify the apostle Jude with the writer of this epistle. The correct translation, "Jude the son of James," was found in Tyndale's, Cranmer's, and Luther's versions and it is restored in the Revised Versions of to-day. This Jude, then, was an apostle, had two names, Jude and Thaddæus, with a surname, Lebbæus, and he was the son of James the Less and the grandson of Alphæus.

Did this man write the Epistle of Jude? We think not, for the following reasons, (1) Tradition says that this Jude labored in Syria and died in Edessa, but the Epistle of Jude is not in the earliest Syrian Bible, the Peshito. It surely would have been admitted to their canon if it had been written by the apostle who had labored in their own territory. (2) The author of the epistle speaks of the apostles in the most objective fashion as if he himself had no connection with them. He exhorts his readers to remember what the apostles had said to them (verses 17, 18), and never suggests that the words which he quotes were his own. (3) He evidently did not have apostolic authority or he would have been more independent in his personal proclamation of the truth, and he would not have been likely to introduce himself under the surety of another man's name, as "the brother of James."

Therefore we turn finally to the sixth Jude mentioned in our New Testament as the most probable author of the epistle. 6. This is Jude, the brother of James, who stood at the head of the church at Jerusalem and who was the brother of Jesus. James, the son of Zebedee and the brother of John, had died before this epistle was written. The one James who was prominent in the church in the later apos-

tolic days was the man in authority in the mother church of Christendom at Jerusalem. He may have been chosen for this presidency partly because of the fact that he was a brother of Jesus as well as because of his pre-eminent personal abilities.

Both of these brothers, James and Jude, wrote epistles and neither of them introduces himself to his readers by this highest honor he could have had in the church, as "the brother of Jesus." Why is this? Probably because of their reverence for the brother who had been resurrected and declared to be the Son of God with power. Humility would prevent them from laying any public or special stress upon their claim to blood relationship with the Redeemer of men and the Saviour of the race. James was content to call himself "the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ," and Jude in all modesty follows his example and calls himself "the servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James."

We know nothing of Jude in later tradition except that one incident concerning his grandchildren recorded by Hegesippus has been preserved by Eusebius.[15] He tells us that these two grandchildren, Zocer and James, were living in the time of the Emperor Domitian, and the emperor having heard that they belonged to the royal line of David, and fearing that they would make an attempt to regain the throne, summoned them into his presence for an examination. He found they were poor peasants with hands hardened with toil, and they told him that they owned only thirty-nine acres of land between them and that the only kingdom to which they aspired was a heavenly and angelic one which was to appear at the end of the world. Then Domitian dismissed them, "despising them as of no account," and he issued a decree to stop the persecution of the Christian Church.

[15] Hist. Eccl. iii, 20. Also compare Philip of Side, Texte und Untersuchungen, v, 2, p. 169.

The grandchildren when they were released "ruled the churches, because they were witnesses and were also relatives of the Lord." They lived until the time of Trajan, held in honor among the Christians because of their faithful testimony in the imperial court and because of their illustrious lineage. We conclude that their grandfather Jude, the brother of James, who was the brother of Jesus, was the author of this epistle, for this conclusion agrees with the earliest church tradition and there are indications of these relationships in the style and the references of the epistle itself, and the name of this Jude was so insignificant in the early church history that it would not seem likely to tempt any forger to its use.

V. Authenticity

The epistle is not in the Peshito. It is not quoted by Justin Martyr or Irenæus, and there are very few references to it among the early writers. The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, recovered by Bryennios in 1875 after centuries of disappearance, and variously dated by the authorities from A. D. 80 to 120, has a passage in 2. 7 which reads, "Thou shalt not hate anyone, but some thou shalt rebuke, and for some thou shalt pray, and some thou shalt love above thine own life." Professor Chase and Professor Zahn believe that this passage is founded on Jude 22; and if that is true, we have a recognition of Jude before or near the end of the first century. Eusebius classed it among the disputed books. Theodore of Mopsuestia rejected it.

On the other hand it may be said that it is too short and too insignificant to be quoted often, and that its surprising quotations from apocryphal and suspected sources and its other strange and unique phenomena naturally would arouse some question concerning it. Nevertheless, the Muratorian Fragment contains it in its canonical list. It is found in the Itala or Old Latin version. It was known and used very

generally in the Western church at a very early date. Tertullian believed it to be genuine and apostolic. Clement of Alexandria quotes it as Scripture and comments upon it.[16] Origen does the same and seems to have accepted it himself, although he knew that others had doubts concerning it. Didymus of Alexandria wrote a commentary on the epistle, though he too knew of doubts as to its authenticity. Augustine refers to it as "the canonical epistle of the Apostle Jude."[17] Jerome decides that it ought to be reckoned among the Scriptures. Athanasius included it in his canon.

The councils of Laodicea, A. D. 360 and of Hippo, A. D. 393 and of Carthage, A. D. 397 put it into the canon by formal action and it has remained there ever since. Luther decided against the authenticity of the epistle, and he was followed by Semler, Schleiermacher, Neander, Reuss, Baur, and Hilgenfeld. However, Zahn points out the fact that it was accepted about the year A. D. 200 in all the lands around the Mediterranean Sea, and this would not have been likely to be true if it had been a forgery of the second century. It must have been accepted as a genuine product of the apostolic age. Harnack agrees with this conclusion.

There is nothing in the epistle to indicate any particular place or any definite time for its writing. Alexandria, Asia Minor, and Palestine have been suggested as the locality of those addressed, and such good and bad people as are pictured in the epistle may have lived in any of these places. Chase in Hastings's Bible Dictionary thinks that it was written about the same time with the Pastoral Epistles, the Apocalypse, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Epistle of Peter. Zahn suggests the years A. D. 70-75, Chase, Credner, Ewald, Hofmann, Keil, Lumby, Reuss, Salmon, Sieffert, and Von Soden would date the epistle shortly prior to the reign of Domitian A. D. 81. Those who accept it as

[16] Paed. III, viii, Strom. III, ii, Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. VI, xiv, 1.

[17] Augustine, De Civ. Dei, xviii, 38.

authentic must agree that it was written in the latter half of the first century.

Salmon in his Introduction, speaking of the Epistles of James and Jude, says, "What is really surprising is that of these two, it is the letter of the less celebrated man which seems to have been the better known, and to have obtained the wider circulation. The external testimony to the Epistle of James is comparatively weak, and it is only the excellence of the internal evidence which removes all hesitation. Now, the case is just the reverse with regard to Jude's epistle. There is very little in the letter itself to enable us to pronounce a confident opinion as to the date of composition; but it is recognized by writers who are silent with respect to the Epistle of James."[18]

VI. Purpose of Writing

The epistle was called out by some special emergency. Some individuals had been active in propagating false doctrines and Jude was sure that they would lead to corrupting practices, and he wrote to warn his readers against them. It is not likely that there were any organized heretic and hostile sects at this time; but if these individuals had been left to themselves they easily might have led to such things. Jude contemplated such a result with horror, and in the denunciative and vehement style of the Old Testament prophets he inveighed against their villainies and their insubordinations. He was a fiery, devoted soul, and this epistle of protest, and warning, and exhortation, sent out it may be to the Christians of all Palestine, has preserved to our day a sample of his zeal for the common salvation and his devotion to the cause of the common Lord.

[18] Salmon, Introduction, p. 472.

A CLOSING WORD

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Our work upon the Special Introduction to the books of the New Testament has now been finished. We have tried to determine the circumstances occasioning the composition of each book, the aim and object of its writing, the certain or probable place of its composition, its reception and its history. We have endeavored to reproduce all the essential facts concerning the author of each book, his characteristics and biography, and the traces of his personality which his pen has fixed for us. In some cases we have outlined the argument or have given a synopsis of the contents of the books, and in all cases we have attempted to lay the foundations for more careful and detailed study in the future days.

Moses went up "unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah," and there the Lord showed him all the promised land. These four volumes have given us Pisgah views of the Pauline Epistles, the Johannine Writings, the Synoptic Gospels and the Book of Acts, and the remaining New Testament Epistles. We have seen the main outlines of the New Testament promised land, and the relative sizes and positions of its various parts, and their relations to each other and the whole. We have swept them all in one panorama. We have some general conception of the book. Its separate parts are full of wonders and beauties all their own, and they will repay minute and diligent exploration. This introductory work, this general view, is simply preliminary to the work of detailed interpretation.

Moses died there in Moab and never entered into personal possession of the promised land. It would be fatal to the purpose for which these four volumes were written if their readers after the Pisgah view they have been given

were not fascinated with the prospect set before them and filled with a desire to go on and possess this land and make it all their own. These books are merely preparatory to that task.

We recall one of the closing words of Paul to his beloved child, Timothy; and we make it our last exhortation to any one who may read any or all of these books, "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth,"[1] or, "cutting a straight course through the word of truth." We believe that all which has been written in these books will be helpful to that end. We believe that in many instances it will be impossible to handle the word of God aright without a knowledge of the facts which they contain. It is only in that faith that we have written them.

The verb in the original of that passage in Second Timothy is a compound signifying "cutting a straight course through." The figure may have been suggested by those old Roman roads which went in straight lines from the golden milestone in the Forum to the farthermost reaches of the Empire. They turned aside for no obstacle. They never took the easy way around. They always went the straight way through. The rivers were bridged, the mountains were tunneled, the low places filled up and the rough places made smooth. They went straight as an arrow to their mark. That verb may suggest that the Christian worker ought to know his New Testament so well that he can go like one of those old Roman roads straight to any truth he may desire to find or to use in it.

Many go around all the difficult places. They find themselves utterly unable to cut a straight course through them. Many wander through the New Testament as if they were in a morass with no sure footing or as if the book were a

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[1] 2 Tim. 2. 15.

fog-bank in which no one by any possibility could find his way. Many instead of cutting a straight course all the way through the divine revelation content themselves with following some little bypath of sectarian interest or merely curious value, and while they make themselves master of all the texts which bear upon their peculiar folly or fad they never have any glimpse or any conception of the vast extents of truth they have left unexplored.

It is not an easy task to become a master of the New Testament. It is the labor of a lifetime to become familiar with the whole of its contents and to understand their meaning. All that these four volumes contain is intended simply to get us ready for that task. To become a competent interpreter any man must begin with these things and then go on to study long and hard. He must give diligence to make himself approved unto God. He never will be able to drive a straight furrow until by diligent study he has acquired proficiency and efficiency and sufficiency in this field; and without these he will be unapproved of God and many a time he will be put to shame.

From Pisgah's height let us now go down to live in this land and to cut straight courses through it for ourselves and for others until the wayfaring man shall rejoice in it and all the ransomed of the Lord shall find good roads and safe guidance through it until they come to Zion with everlasting joy upon their heads. The blessing of our God will attend all who assist, however humbly, in this endeavor.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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INDEXES

I. INDEX OF NAMES

Abbott, 192, 200, 202, 217
Ackworth, 251
Adeney, 62, 75, 105, 164, 218, 249
Alexander, 57
Alford, 56, 63, 68, 105, 165, 192, 200
Allen, 249
Ambrose, 191
Andrews, 46, 47
Angus, 56, 200, 250, 253
Apollinaris, 228
Aquinas, 250
Aristion, 58
Athanasius, 28, 191, 239
Augustine, 29, 30, 56, 138, 191, 229, 230, 239
Ayles, 75

Bacon, 31, 68, 75, 107, 164, 249
Bailey, 251
Barth, 62, 75, 106
Bartlet, 62, 71, 75, 105, 164
Bartmann, 106
Basil, 189
Basilides, 182
Bassett, 251
Baumgarten, 68
Baumgarten-Crusius, 65
Baur, 65, 68, 107, 192, 239
Belser, 63, 75, 105
Bengel, 56, 67, 200, 250
Bennett, 253
Benson, 200
Bertholdt, 192
Beyschlag, 71, 75, 105, 156, 164, 251
Beza, 31, 50
Biesenthal, 56
Bigg, 168, 177, 183, 188, 192, 199, 200, 252
Bisping, 56, 71
Blass, 20, 62
Bleek, 31, 34, 45, 56, 63, 71, 75, 106, 164, 192, 200, 220, 249, 250
Boehme, 56, 67
Bousset, 75
Brown, 251
Bruce, 31, 41, 51, 52, 65, 71, 251
Brückner, 75, 106, 107, 192, 200
Bryennios, 238
Bullock, 75
Bunsen, 63, 68, 105, 192
Burger, 253

Cæsar, 39
Caius, 29
Cajetan, 108
Calvin, 26, 30, 50, 57, 165, 173, 191, 217, 250
Camerlynck, 192
Cameron, 62
Campbell, 250
Carlstadt, 12
Carpzov, 45, 46
Carr, 105, 252
Cellerier, 252
Chadwick, 251
Chapman, 58
Charles, 231
Chase, 164, 190, 191, 192, 193, 200, 218, 220, 238, 239
Cheyne, 253
Chrysostom, 56, 71, 189, 230, 250
Clarke, 20, 165, 233, 251
Clemen, 75, 249
Clement of Alexandria, 24, 26, 57, 90, 166, 183, 189, 208, 220, 229, 231, 239
Clement of Rome, 28, 42, 56, 107, 189
Clericus, 63
Cone, 75, 249, 250, 253
Conybeare, 68
Cook, 252
Cornely, 106
Cramer, 56, 57
Credner, 63, 67, 200, 239
Crell, 57

Cullen, 252
Cyprian, 29, 189
Cyril, 108, 191, 208

D'Abbadie, 209
Dale, 251, 252
Dante, 208
Davidson, 65, 68, 71, 75, 85, 86, 107, 192, 200, 220, 249, 250
Deissmann, 20
Delitzsch, 17, 23, 26, 47, 52, 57, 71, 250
De Lyra, 68
De Pressensé, 63, 192
De Wette, 63, 71, 75, 164, 192, 200
Didache, 189, 238
Didymus, 107, 190, 228, 239
Dietlein, 200
Dillenseger, 192
Dindorf, 63
Diognetus, 107, 182
Dionysius, 28
Dioscorides, 214
Dods, 65, 105, 249, 250
Döllinger, 57
Du Bose, 251

Eager, 57, 251
Ebrard, 57, 75, 250
Edwards, 22, 250
Eichhorn, 65, 68, 164, 192, 200, 239
Ephraem, 107, 191, 208
Epiphanius, 83
Erasmus, 30, 56, 108, 192
Erdmann, 105
Eusebius, 11, 22, 24, 26, 27, 71, 90, 93, 107, 166, 183, 189, 190, 208, 210, 237, 238
Euthalius, 68
Ewald, 65, 71, 75, 117, 164, 167, 200, 239

Falconer, 192, 194
Farrar, 31, 32, 34, 63, 75, 89, 106, 164, 167, 175, 187, 192, 200, 201, 217, 225, 226, 232, 249, 250
Feilmoser, 63
Feine, 252
Felten, 106
Field, 57
Findlay, 71, 75
Forster, 56
Fraser, 249
Friedlander, 21
Fronmüller, 200

Galen, 214
Gardiner, 35, 36, 49, 62
Gibson, 105
Gloag, 252
Gobar, 29
Godet, 37, 56, 71, 75, 192, 219
Goodspeed, 62, 68, 75, 250
Grafe, 252
Grau, 62
Gregory of Nazianzen, 62, 107, 189
Gregory of Nyssa, 189
Grensted, 249
Greswell, 166
Grimm, 65, 71, 75, 164, 165
Grotius, 31, 57, 192, 200
Guericke, 63, 192, 200
Gurney, 106

Häring, 75
Harman, 192
Harnack, 59, 68, 75, 107, 192, 200, 209, 220, 239, 249
Harris, 59
Hart, 177, 252
Hase, 165
Hastings, 31, 253
Hatch, 164, 192, 200
Haupt, 202
Hausrath, 65, 75, 107
Hayes, 32, 38, 39, 121, 122, 124, 134, 142
Hefele, 62
Hegesippus, 92, 93, 237
Heigl, 56
Heinrichs, 68
Heinrici, 62
Heisen, 252
Hengstenberg, 200
Henkel, 192
Henry, 126, 251
Herder, 200
Hermas, 107, 182
Heumann, 63
Hicks, 58
Hilary, 30
Hilgenfeld, 47, 63, 68, 75, 107, 192, 200, 220, 239

Hippolytus, 29
Hoare, 251
Hodge, 109
Hofmann, 56, 67, 105, 167, 192, 200, 239
Hollman, 75, 250, 253
Holtzheuer, 56
Holtzmann, 28, 47, 65, 68, 75, 192, 200, 220, 249
Hort, 71, 106, 164, 167, 196, 252
Howson, 68, 141, 165
Hug, 56, 71, 106, 164, 200
Huther, 105, 164, 192, 200, 252, 253

Ignatius, 107, 189
Immer, 47, 192
Irenæus, 29, 42, 107, 183, 189, 229, 238
Itala, 238

Jacobus, 67
Jacoby, 106, 192, 220
Jerome, 29, 30, 56, 71, 166, 191, 229, 230, 239
Johnstone, 165, 252
Jülicher, 47, 65, 68, 75, 107, 192, 200, 209, 218, 249
Justin Martyr, 46, 107, 189, 238

Kay, 56, 75, 250
Keil, 62, 71, 75, 239
Keim, 75
Kern, 106, 192
Klostermann, 63
Kluge, 65
Knowling, 252
Kögel, 252
Köstlin, 47, 65, 68
Krüger, 105
Kübel, 62, 75
Kühl, 209
Kurtz, 63, 68, 75

Lange, 63, 75, 192, 200
Lardner, 75
Lechler, 105
Le Clerc, 166
Leighton, 253
Lewin, 51
Lewis, 57, 75
Lightfoot, 164, 219
Lindsay, 75
Linus, 57, 58
Lipsius, 65
Lowndes, 57
Lowrie, 250
Ludwig, 68
Lumby, 169, 192, 200, 239, 253
Lünemann, 63, 71, 75, 250
Luther, 22, 30, 50, 63, 64, 85, 99, 108, 109, 134, 192, 200, 239
Lütterbeck, 63

Mack, 67
Maclear, 226
Maier, 62, 200
Mangold, 68, 105, 192
Mansel, 200
Marsh, 48
Martin, 102, 249
Mason, 253
Maurice, 251
Mayerhoff, 192, 200
Mayor, 85, 94, 96, 105, 117, 200, 252, 253
McCaul, 56
McClymont, 62, 167, 249
McGiffert, 62, 65, 68, 75, 107
Meinertz, 252
Melanchthon, 30
Ménégoz, 65, 75, 251
Methodius, 208
Michaelis, 165, 200, 249
Mill, 56, 75, 106, 166, 200
Milligan, 62, 68, 75, 249, 251
Moffatt, 65, 68, 164, 167, 192, 200, 203, 213, 214, 220, 234, 249
Moll, 65, 71, 75, 250
Mommsen, 96
Moorehead, 192
Moule, 251
Moulton, J. H., 59, 102
Moulton, W. F., 63, 250
Müller, 63
Münster, 67
Murray, 251
Muratorian Fragment, 11, 29, 42, 107, 183, 208, 238
Mynster, 56

Nairne, 251
Neander, 105, 164, 192, 200, 239
Neudecker, 65
Nicephorus, 231
Niemeyer, 121

Noack, 41
Noesselt, 67
Norton, 63
Novatian, 61

Oesterley, 252
Olshausen, 56
Origen, 11, 22, 27, 28, 31, 34, 37, 107, 183, 189, 190, 228, 229, 230, 231, 233, 239
Osiander, 63
Overbeck, 28, 62
Owen, 56, 251

Pantænus, 24, 25
Papias, 166, 182
Parry, 252
Paulus, 56
Peake, 59, 68, 107, 200, 249, 250, 251
Pearson, 166
Perdelwitz, 58
Perpetua, 208
Pfleiderer, 47, 52, 63, 68, 75, 192
Philastrius, 191
Philip of Side, 237
Phillips, 23, 34
Philo, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 52, 60, 63
Photius, 29
Plummer, 192, 200, 217, 252, 253
Plumptre, 41, 46, 63, 68, 105, 164, 192, 200, 252, 253
Polycarp, 107, 182, 189
Porter, 251
Pott, 166
Priscillian, 191
Pullan, 249

Radford, 251
Ramsay, 51, 58, 68, 75, 173, 192
Rees, 48
Reithmaier, 56
Renan, 62, 68, 75, 105, 164, 182, 192, 220
Rendall, 33, 34, 35, 36, 49, 65, 67, 75, 250, 251
Resch, 63, 64
Reuss, 21, 63, 68, 192, 200, 239, 249
Réville, 68, 75, 107
Riehm, 63, 71, 75, 251
Ritschl, 62, 68, 105
Roberts, 75
Robertson, 110, 252
Romanes, 252
Ropes, 75, 84, 252
Röth, 67
Rothe, 63
Rotherham, 251
Rovers, 75
Rufinus, 189, 191

Sabatier, 106, 192
Salmasius, 192
Salmon, 62, 71, 75, 105, 164, 167, 183, 188, 192, 200, 209, 239, 240, 250
Salmond, 253
Sanday, 75, 162, 192, 209, 250
Saphir, 56, 251
Scaliger, 192
Schäfer, 164
Schaff, 17, 23, 50, 65, 75, 200
Schenkel, 68, 75, 200
Schiele, 59
Schleiermacher, 68, 239
Schmidt, 62, 67, 106, 192
Schneckenburger, 68, 105
Scholten, 63, 75, 106
Schott, 63, 71
Schultz, 62
Schulz, 68
Schulze, 63
Schürer, 68
Schwegler, 47, 68, 192
Scott, 252
Selwyn, 63
Semler, 63, 67, 192, 200, 239
Serapion, 210, 211
Seyffarth, 65
Sheldon, 218
Sieffert, 164, 167, 200, 239
Siegfried, 45
Simcox, 57, 192
Simon, 31
Smith, H. M., 252
Smith, W. R., 65
Sozomen, 208
Spitta, 82, 192, 195, 200, 252, 253
Stanley, 105, 165
Stein, 67
Stevens, 75, 105, 192
Stier, 57, 200, 252
Storr, 56, 67
Strachan, 190, 220, 253

Strong, 250
Stuart, 56, 75, 250

Taylor, 252
Tertullian, 29, 61, 183, 189, 229, 230, 239
Thales, 215
Thayer, 36
Theile, 105, 252
Theodore, 189, 238
Theodoret, 71, 189
Theophilus, 189
Theophylact, 71
Thiersch, 62, 66, 71, 75, 105, 164, 192, 200
Tholuck, 22, 34, 63, 71, 75, 250
Trenkle, 106
Twesten, 62

Ullmann, 62, 68, 192

Vaughan, 24, 65, 71, 75, 250, 251
Vincent, 250
Volkmar, 62, 68, 75, 107
Von Soden, 46, 65, 68, 75, 107, 192, 220, 239, 250, 252, 253

Walker, 62, 67
Wall, 67
Warfield, 188, 192
Weber, 67
Weiffenbach, 106
Weiss, 31, 36, 62, 71, 75, 105, 165, 192, 200, 217, 250, 252
Weizsäcker, 65, 68, 75
Welch, 57
Wernle, 45
Wesley, 114, 115
Westcott, 23, 30, 40, 65, 68, 71, 75, 196, 250, 251
Wetstein, 68, 200
Whedon, 26, 46, 56, 250
Wickham, 250
Wieseler, 62, 68, 75
Wiesinger, 106, 200
Willett, 250
Windischmann, 192
Wolf, 200
Woll, 67
Wordsworth, 51, 56, 106, 200
Wrede, 75, 107

Zahn, 20, 28, 55, 61, 62, 68, 75, 94, 105, 164, 188, 192, 195, 200, 238, 239, 250
Zeller, 107
Ziegler, 63
Zwingli, 30

II. INDEX OF TEXTS

Genesis
22. 16f, 40
Exodus
24. 8, 40
Deuteronomy
32. 35, 40, 51
2 Samuel
1. 5, 40
Isaiah
2. 13, 40; 40–66, 23
Jeremiah
31. 33, 84
Enoch
10. 15–16, 231; 21. 6, 231
Esdras
12. 42, 207
Matthew
1. 19, 116; 5. 16, 158; 5. 34–37, 104; 5. 48, 102; 6. 25–34, 158; 7. 1, 104; 7. 7, 102; 7. 16–20, 105; 7. 24–26, 103; 10. 2, 235; 10. 28, 157; 14. 28–31, 133; 16. 16, 123, 148; 16. 18, 139, 147; 16. 22, 123; 16. 23, 123, 147; 17. 25–26, 149; 18. 21–35, 151; 19. 27, 151; 19. 27–29, 128; 21. 42, 148; 22. 21, 158; 23. 12, 104; 24. 33, 105
Mark
1. 32–37, 130; 3. 16, 235; 9. 2–7, 128; 11. 23, 103; 14. 27–31, 128; 14. 29, 131; 14. 37, 136
Luke
4. 25, 229; 5. 1–6, 125; 5. 8, 129; 6. 16, 235; 6. 20, 103; 6. 24–25, 103; 13. 23–30, 178, 179; 22. 31, 153; 22. 32, 139; 22. 33, 159; 22. 49–50, 122; 24. 8–12, 132
John
1. 29, 159; 1. 42, 139; 5. 31, 109; 6. 68, 148; 8. 14, 109; 13. 1–10, 126; 13. 4–6, 151; 13. 17, 103; 13. 36–37, 129, 133; 14. 1, 157; 14. 22, 235; 16. 29–30, 131; 20. 3–8, 132; 20. 29, 158; 21. 3, 131; 21. 7, 122, 132; 21. 15–17, 159; 21. 17, 138; 21. 21–22, 129
Acts
1. 13, 235; 3. 15, 148; 4. 11, 148; 5. 30, 154; 6. 5, 97; 6. 9, 97; 7. 22, 229; 7. 38, 229; 10. 34, 160; 10. 39, 154; 11. 4–16, 126; 12. 17, 90; 13. 6–41, 36; 14. 14, 60; 15. 6–29, 91; 15. 22, 57; 15. 39, 60; 18. 24–28, 62; 18. 26, 63; 22. 1–21, 36; 21. 18, 91; 21. 21, 54; 21. 24, 54; 28. 17–20, 36
Romans
2. 6–10, 113; 3. 28, 108; 12. 19, 51; 13. 7, 162
1 Corinthians
1. 12, 62; 3. 4–6, 62; 3. 22, 62; 4. 6, 62; 10. 4, 229; 15. 26, 51; 15. 27, 51; 16. 12, 62, 63
2 Corinthians
9. 8, 113
Galatians
1. 1, 49; 1. 18, 91; 1. 19, 91; 2. 9, 61, 91; 2. 12, 91; 2. 13, 60; 2. 14, 60; 3. 19, 229; 5. 3, 54
Ephesians
2. 8–9, 108; 2. 10, 113
Philippians
4. 8, 204
2 Thessalonians
2. 17, 113
2 Timothy
2. 15, 244; 3. 8, 229
Titus
3. 13, 62
Hebrews
1. 1, 41; 1. 2, 42, 43; 1. 3, 43; 1. 3–4, 43; 1. 6, 43; 1. 8, 43; 2. 1–4, 38; 2. 3, 49, 50, 59; 2. 8, 51; 2. 14, 51; 3. 7–19, 38; 3. 9, 74; 3. 17, 74; 4. 1, 59; 4. 7, 40; 4. 12, 44; 4. 12–14, 45; 4. 14, 44; 4. 14–16, 38; 5. 1–10. 39, 44; 5. 11, 68; 5. 11–6. 20, 38;

5. 12, 68; 6. 13, 40; 7. 3, 44; 7. 5, 60; 7. 9, 60; 7. 11, 60; 7. 25, 44; 7. 26. 44; 8. 4, 74; 8. 13, 75; 9. 20, 40; 10. 1–4, 74; 10. 5, 39; 10. 19–39, 38; 10. 24, 59; 10. 25, 59; 10. 30, 40, 51; 10. 32, 59; 10. 32–34, 75; 10. 34, 68; 10. 36, 75; 10. 37, 75; 11. 10, 75; 11. 37, 229; 12. 1–13. 19, 38; 12. 4, 68; 12. 12, 75; 13. 2, 69; 13. 5, 45; 13. 7, 68, 75; 13. 14, 75; 13. 15, 61; 13. 22, 61; 13. 23, 51, 69; 13. 24, 73

James

1. 1, 82, 83, 90; 1. 2, 104; 1. 3–4, 113; 1. 4, 102; 1. 5, 102; 1. 6, 84, 97, 99, 103, 113; 1. 10–11, 100; 1. 11, 84, 97; 1. 15, 97, 100; 1. 17, 100; 1. 18, 84, 100; 1. 22, 103; 1. 23–24, 98, 101; 1. 25, 103, 104; 2. 1, 82, 113; 2. 1–4, 98; 2. 2, 83; 2. 2–4, 84; 2. 4, 99; 2. 5, 99; 2. 6, 99; 2. 7, 99; 2. 8, 104; 2. 8–12, 83; 2. 8–13, 86; 2. 12, 104; 2. 13, 105; 2. 14, 99; 2. 15, 98; 2. 16, 98, 99; 2. 17, 108; 2. 21, 83, 84; 2. 22, 114; 2. 23, 113; 2. 24, 108; 2. 25, 84; 3. 1–12, 84–98; 3. 4–5, 100; 3. 5, 100; 3. 11, 84, 99, 100; 3. 12, 84, 99, 100, 105; 3. 17, 98; 3. 18, 100; 4. 1, 99; 4. 4, 84, 99, 100; 4. 4–6, 84; 4. 5, 99; 4. 8–9, 104; 4. 10, 104; 4. 10–12, 86; 4. 11, 83, 107; 4. 11–12, 104; 4. 12, 84, 99; 4. 13–16, 98; 4. 13–17, 86; 4. 14, 99, 100; 5. 1, 103; 5. 1–6, 98; 5. 3, 100; 5. 4, 83, 100; 5. 6, 116; 5. 7, 84, 100; 5. 7–11, 84; 5. 9, 105; 5. 11, 84; 5. 12, 104; 5. 13, 107; 5. 17, 84, 86, 229; 5. 18, 84

1 Peter

1. 1, 165; 1. 2, 176; 1. 3, 148; 1. 3–4, 157; 1. 4, 152; 1. 5, 168; 1. 8, 158; 1. 11, 154, 156; 1. 12, 169; 1. 15, 176; 1. 17, 161, 170; 1. 18–19, 159; 1. 21, 157; 2. 2, 170; 2. 4–8, 146; 2. 9, 160; 2. 11, 171; 2. 12, 158, 169; 2. 13–17, 150; 2. 15, 171; 2. 16, 171; 2. 17, 157, 158; 2. 21, 169, 171; 2. 21–24, 154; 2. 25, 160, 169; 3. 1–2, 169; 3. 7, 148; 3. 8–9, 151; 3. 13–14, 157; 3. 15, 157; 3. 18, 155; 3. 18–20, 176–182; 3. 21–22, 157; 4. 1, 155; 4. 6, 177; 4. 8, 151; 4. 12, 153; 4. 13, 155, 156, 169; 4. 15, 171; 4. 16, 157; 4. 17, 160; 5. 1, 155, 156, 169; 5. 2, 160, 169, 175; 5. 2–4, 160; 5. 3, 175; 5. 4, 152, 157, 169, 175; 5. 5, 152; 5. 7, 158; 5. 8, 153, 175; 5. 8–9, 153; 5. 10, 153, 156, 159; 5. 12, 168

2 Peter

1. 3, 204; 1. 4, 204; 1. 16, 195, 204; 1. 18, 195, 212; 1. 19–21, 206, 207; 2. 2–3, 212; 2. 3, 204; 2. 20, 196; 2. 22, 214; 3. 1, 195; 3. 1–2, 212; 3. 2, 213; 3. 3–5, 211; 3. 4, 212; 3. 5, 215; 3. 7, 215; 3. 10, 214, 216; 3. 12, 216; 3. 15, 192; 3. 16, 213

Jude

1, 225; 2, 225; 5–7, 225; 6, 228; 8, 225; 16, 225; 19, 225; 20–21, 225; 22–23, 225; 25, 225

III. INDEX OF SUBJECTS

Africanus, Epistle to, 27
Alexandria, 24, 31, 60
Alexandrian thought, 21, 41
  school, 24
Alexandrinus, codex, 40, 63, 77, 205
Akhmim, 208, 210
Amanuensis, 28, 95, 194
Ambrosian library, 231
Amos and James, 87
Ananus, 93
Andrew, 96
Anonymity of Hebrews, 18
Anti-legomena, 12
Antioch, 61
Antioch, synod of, 24
Antiochian school, 24
Apocalypse of Peter, 207–209, 211, 213, 216, 220
Apocalyptical phraseology, 232
Apocryphal books, 41, 88, 117
Apollos, 31, 62–64
Aquila, 56, 59, 62, 64
Assumption of Moses, 218, 231–232

Baalam, 205
Babylon, 164–167
Barnabas, 29, 59–62, 65, 189
Bruce, 230
Bunyan, 93, 97
Burns, 97

Cæsarea Philippi, 126
Canonicity, 12
Carthage, synod of, 30, 108
Character of James, 91–93, 117–118
  of John, 132
  of Peter, 121–145
Claromontanus, codex, 77
Clement, Epistle of, 28
Clement of Rome, 56, 206–207
Commission to Peter, 159
Confession, the Great, 123
Contradictions harmonized, 109–114
Corinth, 62, 63
Cornelius and Peter, 126, 160–161
Creation from water, 215
Cyprus, 60

De Foe, 94
Denial, the great, 137–138
Destruction by fire, 215–216
Disappointment of Christian Jews, 70
Dispersion of the Jews, 83
Distinct theology in Hebrews, 21
Domitian, 237, 239
Draught of fishes, 124–125, 128–129

Ecclesiasticus, 88, 89
Egyptian versions, 191
Enoch, Book of, 228, 229–231
Ephraemi Rescriptus, codex, 205
Epistle of Barnabas, 61
Example of Christ, 171
Exhortations in Hebrews, 38

Faith, in James and Paul, 111–112
Forgiveness, unlimited, 150–151
Formulæ of citation, 41–45

Gadara, 95
Galilee, 95
Geneva Bible, 30
Gethsemane, 153
Gizeh museum, 208
Glory through sufferings, 155–157
Gospel according to Peter, 210, 211, 216
Greek of Hebrews, 19–20, 27, 32, 34–35, 36, 37
  of James, 95–97
  of Peter, 167–168

Hapax legomena, 168
Harrowing of Hell, 176–182
Hebrews, a literary masterpiece, 19
  a mysterious epistle, 17
  not a translation, 27

Hippo, synod of, 29
Holiness, outward, in James, 114
Holy places, 212–213
Hospitality at Jerusalem, 69
Human nature, in Peter, 121
Humility, a girdle, 152–153
Hyperbole, Peter's, 130–131

Impetuosity of Peter, 121–130
Inaccuracies in Hebrews, 49
Interest in life, Peter's, 148–149
Interpretation, allegorical, 22, 47, 48
Itala, 11, 12, 187

James, last of prophets, 87
  presiding at Jerusalem, 90–91, 92
Jesus and James, 115–118
Jewish-Alexandrian school, 42
Jonah, 139
Josephus, 93, 96, 202–205
Judas Barsabbas, 235
  Iscariot, 235
  Maccabeus, 235
  of Damascus, 235
  of Galilee, 235
  the apostle, 235–236
Justification, in James and Paul, 112

Last Supper, 125–126
Law, in Hebrews, 53
Linus, Pope, 57
Logos doctrine, 42, 43, 44
  title, 44, 45
Longfellow, 142
Luke, 19, 26, 35, 57
Luther, on James, 108, 109

Mark, 57, 165
Matthias, election of, 133–134
Meddling, 172–174
Mediating character of Hebrews, 22
Medical terms, 214
Melchizedek, 17, 43, 44, 48, 67
Milk, unadulterated, 170–171
Modern character of Hebrews, 23
Morals, Christian, in James, 83–84, 88–90
Muratorian Fragment, 11, 29, 42
Muzzling critics, 171

Old Testament character of James, 83, 85–87
Optimism of Peter, 143
Outline of Jude, 226–227
Oxyrynchus papyrus, 77

Palestine, in James, 116
Palsied man's cure, 111
Papacy and Peter, 140–41
Paronomasia, 27
Parousia, 197, 211
Peshito, 11, 12, 28, 187, 236, 238
Petrine passage, 146–148
Philip the apostle, 96
  the deacon, 58
Philo, 206
Philonian phraseology, 42, 206
Pisgah views, 243–244
Platonic doctrine, 46
  Ideas, 45
Portrait of Peter, 143–145
Priscilla, 59, 62, 64

Quotations from Old Testament, 40

Radicalism of Hebrews, 54, 76
Raphael, 66
Rebuke, the Great, 123, 136–137
Respect of persons, 170
Resurrection appearance to Peter, 181–182
Rome, 28, 29

Salvation, for few? 178–179
Samaria, 61
Septuagint, 39
Sermon on Mount, 82, 86, 90, 102
Shakespeare, 97
Sifting of Peter, 141, 153
Silas, 56, 166
Silvanus, 166, 167, 168, 182, 192, 195
Simeon, 192
Sinaiticus, codex, 77, 205
Sociology of James, 115
Style of Hebrews, 32, 34, 35, 36
  of James, 93–105
  of Paul, 32, 33, 36
  of Peter, 167–169, 175
  of Wendell Phillips, 33
  of Daniel Webster, 33

Sufferings of Christ, 154–155
Synagogues, Christian, 83

Targum of Onkelos, 40
Temple tax, 149–150
Thaddæus, 235–236
Thales, 215
Timothy, 26, 64, 65
Traditions, in New Testament, 228–229
Trajan, 238
Transfiguration, 127–128

Uniqueness of Hebrews, 17

Value of Hebrews to Jews, 55
Vaticanus, codex, 40, 77, 191, 204
Version, Authorized, 19
  American Revised, 19
  English Revised, 19
Vespasian, 93
Vocabulary, of Hebrews, 36
  of Luke, 36
  of Paul, 36
Vulgate, 191

Wisdom, Book of, 41
Wisdom of Solomon, 88
Words characteristic of Hebrews, 37
  of Paul, 37
Works, in James and Paul, 112

Zenas, 57

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